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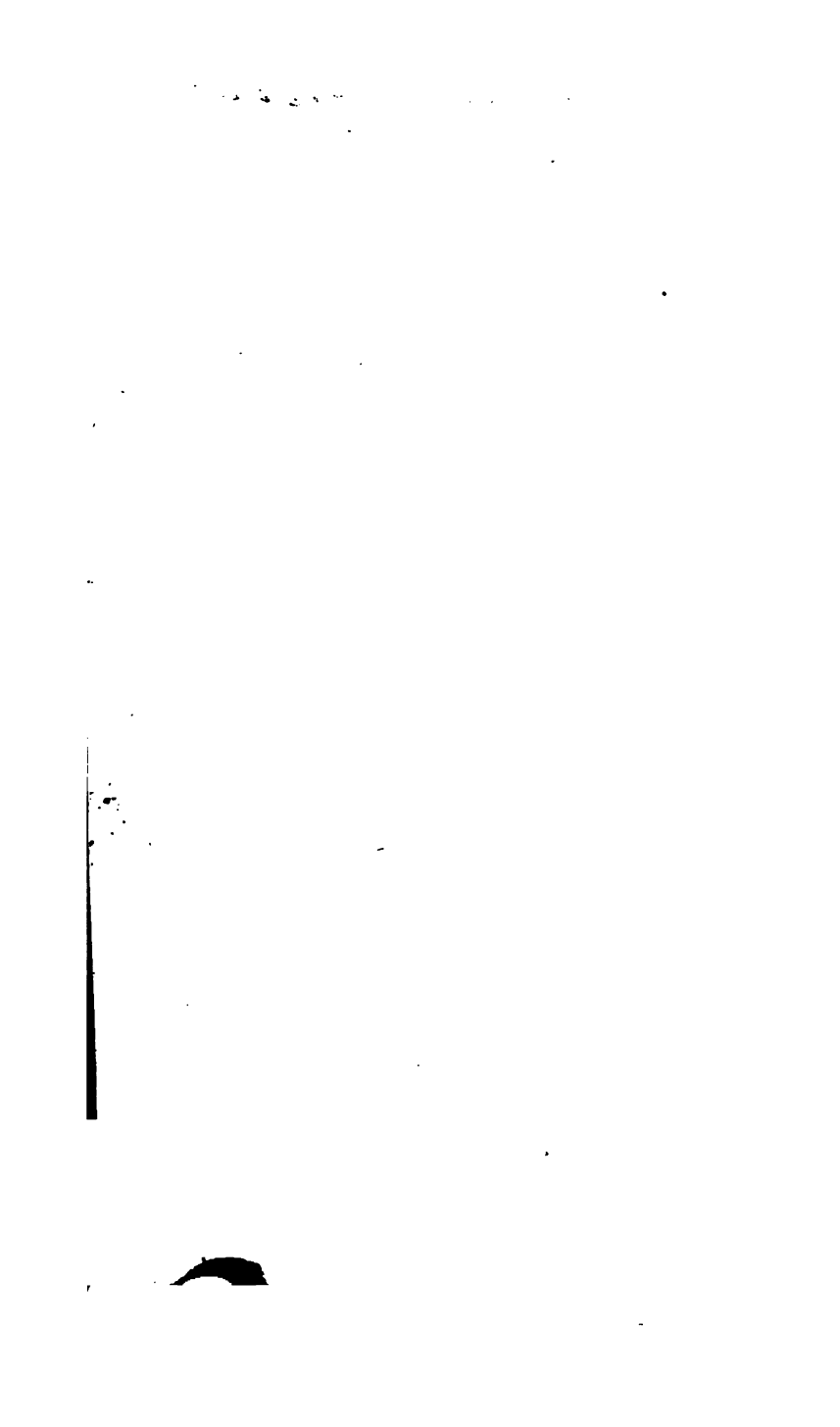






Eliot

SEK



From the Author

CHRISTIANITY

AND

SLAVERY;

IN A

COURSE OF LECTURES

PREACHED AT

THE CATHEDRAL AND PARISH CHURCH OF ST.
MICHAEL, BARBADOS.

BY

EDWARD ELIOT, B. D.

ARCHDEACON OF BARBADOS, AND LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF
EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

"As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even
so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

1 THESS. II. 4.

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AND PARKER, OXFORD.

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TO
THE RESIDENT AND NON-RESIDENT
HOLDERS OF SLAVE PROPERTY
IN
THE WEST INDIES,
THE FOLLOWING LECTURES
WITH THE EARNEST PRAYER THAT THE DUTIES RECOMMENDED
IN THEM, MAY BE FAITHFULLY AND FEARLESSLY
PERFORMED BY THEMSELVES,
AND
BY THEIR SUBORDINATE AGENTS,
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY
THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Lectures (with the exception of the last) were preached at the Cathedral in Barbados, before large congregations of the white inhabitants. My object was to impress on the community the necessity of attending to the moral and religious welfare of their slave population. The subjects are not new. Most of them have, within the last few years, been at times prominently insisted upon in the pulpit (though not in a connected and consecutive form) by myself or by my brethren in the ministry. The lectures are now published with a view

to disseminate more widely the suggestions which my residence in the West Indies, from the establishment there of episcopacy, has enabled me to offer, as well to non-resident proprietors in England, as to their agents and subordinate officers on estates in these colonies. I am aware that many of the facts and opinions introduced in them will meet, at best, with a hesitating and reluctant approval. Why, it will be asked, thus draw forth the faults of our ancestors, or even expose our own defects? Why disturb us with the language of reproof, or with exhortations to measures of doubtful expediency?

——— *Quid opus teneras mordaci radere vero
Auriculas?*

My answer is, because the case requires that there should be no concealment of the truth, and because the official situation in which the author is placed, not

only authorizes, but compels him to speak plainly on the subject of Christian duties. “If,” says the pious Augustine, “we must give an account of our idle words, how much more of our idle silence!”

The minister of the gospel in the West Indies is often beset with difficulties. He must either neglect his duty, or give offence to the people. If he preaches openly and unhesitatingly the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, he is reproached with being needlessly severe. His discourse, to use the words of Bishop Latimer, is considered to have a “full bite, to be a nipping sermon, a pinching sermon, a biting sermon. He is a naughty fellow, a seditious fellow: he maketh trouble and rebellion in the land; he lacketh discretion.” “For my part,” continues the same venerable pre-

late, "it rejoiceth me sometimes, when my friend comes, and tells me that they find fault with my discretion; for by likelihood, think I, the doctrine is true; for if they could find fault with the doctrine, they would not charge me with the lack of discretion, or the inconvenience of the time."

That the system of slavery, as it is at present conducted in the West Indies, is associated with practices of an injurious tendency, even its warmest advocates must allow; but many of the evils complained of may be diminished, if not entirely removed, by the meliorating influence of Christianity. I am at a loss to imagine what advantage the master can propose to himself by keeping his people in a state of moral and mental degradation. Intellect, which is the most

valuable part of man, is at present allowed to run to waste in the slave. His worth is estimated only by his physical power, and no endeavours are used to draw forth into practical usefulness the powers of his mind. The result is manifested in the dearth of invention. Agriculture is conducted in the rudest manner. Human toil is but scantily relieved by the aid of brute force; and few and feeble have been the efforts to substitute machinery in the room of direct unmitigated personal labour.

The evils of slavery are strikingly perceptible to the European on his first arrival. I have often remarked that a protracted residence has the effect either of confirming unalterably his first impressions, or of almost entirely removing them. There is rarely a middle state.

Most generally the feelings of dissatisfaction cease when the mind is familiarized to the objects which at first shocked it. If then such be the effect frequently produced on the disinterested spectator, we ought not to wonder that the proprietor, who regards his all at stake in the continuance of the present system, and whose associations in its favour have grown with his growth, should be adverse to a change. I believe experience has proved, that in no part of England, and among no class of its inhabitants, are unreasonable prejudices so prevalent, and difficult to be subdued, as in our agricultural districts, and among the people who are directly interested in the productive cultivation of the soil.

While I notice the too general acquiescence in abuses which have no sup-

port beyond the authority of long and uninterrupted usage, it is but common justice to declare that a different feeling pervades the respectable and well-educated among the proprietors. Many will give a ready assent to the suggestions contained in these lectures; and if they could secure themselves from the reproach which usually pursues the suspected advocate of innovation, they would be the first to adopt them on their own estates. The dread of incurring the displeasure of the vulgar and uneducated has retarded essentially the required improvements in the condition of the slave.

It would, however, be an error to suppose that nothing has been done because much has been left undone. The talents and unwearied exertions of the head of our church establishment in this diocese

have levelled many of the difficulties which were before opposed to the religious improvement of the negro. His measures have been distinguished by zeal tempered with discretion—by an earnest and unceasing desire for the spiritual welfare of the slave, combined with a studied forbearance from encroachment on the private and recognized rights of the master. If his success has not been always commensurate with his wishes, the failure is attributable to causes over which he has had no control. The statements contained in the following lectures will exhibit the extent to which religious instruction has been carried.

It falls not within their scope to dwell on the melioration of the temporal circumstances of the slave. I may, however, briefly remark that, of late years,

it has been evidently progressive, though there remains still very much to be done. We may judge of the former condition of the negro from the feelings of astonishment with which the old residents, when alluding to the subject, speak of the change they have witnessed. There are some candid enough to attribute the improved treatment of this part of our population to the agitation of the slave question in the mother country. I join most cordially in this opinion, and it would be an unworthy deference to the feelings of those who oppose colonial improvement, to suppress my conviction that both masters and slaves have derived essential benefit from the subject having been viewed with freedom of debate *on both sides*, in the Parliament of Great Britain. I speak in no party spirit.

My conclusions are not drawn from the suggestions of others, or from any pre-conceived and unauthorized opinions of my own. They are the result of unprejudiced observation and experience.

The only favour I request from those into whose hands these Lectures may fall, is that they will read them with the same dispassionate and unprejudiced spirit as that in which they have been, as I trust, written. The really Christian master will find nothing in them which can convey to him the semblance of reproof; for in his practice he has anticipated every duty which I have endeavoured to enforce; and if I have drawn faithfully the character which ought to be exemplified in the proprietor of a plantation, he will recognize the model which I have had before me in himself. As my object is

not to dwell in laudatory language upon the good that exists in these colonies, but to point out the evil, in the hope of procuring its correction, I may incur the suspicion of inclining more to the side of blame than praise. I may even become obnoxious to the censure of persons whom I highly esteem, and whose favourable opinion I should be most anxious to retain. But a minister of the gospel must hazard any sacrifice rather than say, "Peace, when there is no peace,"¹ or "keep back any thing that is profitable"² from his hearers. Those who know me will do me the justice to believe that in the performance of what I consider as an act of duty. I have studiously avoided every expression that I conceive could reasonably

¹ Ezek. xiii. 10.

² Acts xx. 20.

offend or hurt the feelings of any. They are fully aware that no one more deeply laments than I do, the painful excitement with which every subject connected with the West Indies is usually discussed, and that I regard as a real friend to the proprietors, neither him who holds forth their faults to high commendation, nor him who passes a sweeping and indiscriminate censure on every part of their system, and on every individual of their body.

Barbados, Nov. 3, 1832.

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LECTURES.

LECTURE I.

THE DUTY OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL TO
THE SLAVES IN THE WEST INDIES.

(Preached at the Cathedral, Barbados, Jan. 8, 1832.)

MARK xvi. 15.

Preach the Gospel to every creature.

THE duty which is enforced in this brief command has for its object a greater change in the condition and character of mankind, and a larger production of good, both temporal and eternal, than any other in the whole range of Christian obligation. The command is peremptory, and imposes a solemn charge on all who pro-

fess the Christian faith—on the ministers of Christ in its direct application ; but indirectly, and in its more extended meaning, on all believers in Christianity—on the people as well as on the priest.

That the dispensation of the word of God is entrusted to the care, and charged on the responsibility, of the authorized ministers of religion, no one will dispute. They are under a distinct and especial call to *preach the word—to be instant in season, out of season—to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.*¹ *Necessity is therefore laid upon them to preach the gospel, and woe unto them if they preach not the gospel.*²

But while the public ministrations of religion are confided to the duly appointed teacher, and it devolves upon him to preach the word openly and before the congregation ; it is also an obvious inference from the text, supported by many a collateral passage in scripture, that it is

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 2.

² 1 Cor. ix. 16.

the duty of every private Christian to assist in enlarging his Master's kingdom, and in bringing home the wandering and neglected sheep, so that there may be *one fold and one shepherd*.³

“Thy kingdom come,” is a petition familiar to the lips, and I would hope to the hearts also of all our lay brethren, implying their earnest desire to have all men brought under the spiritual rule of Christ, so that “his way may be known upon earth, his saving health among all nations.” Should any one use this petition, conscious at the time that he is hindering a fellow-creature from becoming Christ's faithful soldier and servant; or that when the opportunity is forced upon him, he refuses to afford encouragement to the reception of the gospel by the heathen in the land; or that he is even an unmoved spectator of the spiritual darkness, and unholy living of those around him, and dependent upon

³ John x. 10.

him that man practises hypocrisy before the searcher of the thoughts of men. He utters that with his lips which is opposed to the real wishes and intentions of his heart.

It belongs to the ecclesiastical historian to describe the progress of Christianity in the early ages of the church. Small was the number of the professed believers in the Messiah on the day of Pentecost. A few obscure and despised individuals, unsupported by fortune, or rank, or worldly attainments, were *with one accord in one place*.⁴ They were the seed (small, it is true, and unnoticed, and apparently even buried in the earth,) from which afterwards the church of Christ sprung forth, and became *the tree in the midst of the earth, which grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth*.⁵

PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREA-

⁴ Acts ii. 1.

⁵ Dan. iv. 11.—Matt. xiii. 22.

TURE, was the injunction which animated the first Christians in their dangerous service of conversion, and imposed on them the necessity of declaring to the world the doctrine of Christ crucified. During the first ages, they had many a *trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; they were stoned, and tempted, and slain with the sword; they wandered about, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.*⁶ Yet, notwithstanding every worldly discouragement, *the word of God mightily grew and prevailed.*⁷ It is a strong, but not an unsuitable, or exaggerated figure, that the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church of Christ.

In the fourth century, the gospel was triumphant throughout the civilized world. But England was at this time, and to a much later period, in a state of almost complete barbarism. In some of its darker features it resembled the native shores of the negro in our own days. A

⁶ Heb. xi. 36.

⁷ Acts xix. 20.

slave trade⁸ similar to that which for more than two hundred years has been the reproach of Christian Europe, and the unmerited scourge of Africa, depopulated the coasts of Britain, and gave a sanction to crimes of unnatural ferocity among the people. It happened in these times of our national debasement, that Saint Gregory, who was afterwards raised to the popedom, and was, for his piety and services rendered to religion, deservedly surnamed the great, beheld in the slave-market at Rome a number of English youths exposed for sale. “He was struck by the appearance of the boys, their fine clear skin, the beauty of their flaxen or golden hair, and their ingenuous countenances, so that he asked from what country they came; and when he was told from the Island of Britain, where the inhabitants in general were of that complexion and comeliness, he inquired if the people were Christians, and sighed for compassion at hearing that they were

⁸ Appendix A.

in a state of pagan darkness.”⁹ This accidental discovery of the heathenism which prevailed among the inhabitants of England, led to the successful introduction of Christianity into our mother country, and eventually to the civilization of our Saxon forefathers. Britain, in return, communicated the new faith to the forests and wilds of Germany, and now again in our own days, awakening as it were from a long repose, an island which the haughty Romans had despised as separated from the rest of mankind by a tempestuous ocean, is communicating a better civilization than they could imagine—the enlightening and purifying truths of the gospel, to a world unknown to the ancients. But it is foreign to my purpose to proceed with the history of the Church in England. The few observations which I have advanced on the subject are introductory to a short course of lectures, in which I pro-

⁹ Southey's *Book of the Church*.—Bed. Hist. Eccles. lib. 2. chap. 1.

pose to take a review of the establishment of the Church of Christ in these colonies, and of the benefits, whether immediate or remote, resulting from it. The subject opens to us a wide field of interesting and useful inquiry. If considered impartially, it will produce in us mixed feelings of regret and exultation—regret, when we view the niggard and unchristian spirit which, during so long a period, has either withheld, or most sparingly doled out, religious instruction to those who perhaps more than any other class of our fellow creatures, needed its consolations and promises—and exultation, when we find that at length the attention of the several communities in the West Indies has been directed to this peremptory call of duty, and that there is daily an increase to our hopes of a general diffusion of the gospel among the heathen in our land.

In the sketch which I am about to give of the progress of Christianity in these

colonies, from their earliest settlement down to the present time, I may perhaps be led, from the very nature of the subject, to express opinions apparently severe and uncharitable. I must in all such instances intreat your indulgence, and a favourable construction of my motives. Whatever may escape from me either in this lecture, or in those which may follow it, which has the semblance of harshness, will occur, through inadvertency, and not design. My prayer is, that nothing may be spoken by me which is not from "the holy Scriptures, or agreeable to the same," and that those who hear me, may have grace to receive meekly, and charitably, whatever may conduce to the good of their own souls, or to the welfare, whether temporal or eternal, of those intrusted to their charge.

The first settlers in these colonies brought with them the Protestant religion from England, and with few exceptions, they were all professedly members of the

established church. In this, and in the other old settlements, the erection of churches, and the appointment of authorized and regularly ordained ministers, to the care of distinct parishes, marked the desire, which at that time existed, of maintaining in the colonies the forms of worship prescribed in the mother country. It is pleasing to notice, in some of the early legal enactments, the spirit of personal and practical holiness which seems to have prevailed among the colonists at that period. "That God Almighty may be served and glorified, and that he give a blessing to our labours," (I quote the preamble of one of the oldest laws in this colony,) it is required "that all masters and overseers of families have prayers openly said or read, every morning and evening, with his family." Attendance at public worship on the Lord's day is expressly enjoined, and a distinct prohibition is recorded, against frequenting taverns and victualling houses, dur-

ing the hours of divine service, and against all wanton and profane swearing.¹

We observe, however, with regret, that while the first settlers and planters in this colony were impressed with the importance of a religious establishment, the benefits of which might extend to themselves and to their white or indented servants, they appear to have been altogether regardless of the duty which devolved more immediately on their ministers, but which was imperative also on themselves, of preaching or publishing the gospel to the imported African slaves. The law was silent on this duty ; and as far as the records of the island inform us, we have no authority for supposing that it was considered necessary, or even desirable, to admit this part of their population to a participation in the blessings of the religion of that Redeemer, whose offering of himself upon the cross they acknowledged, with the

¹ Hall's Laws, No. 3.

church to which they belonged, to be a propitiation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. On the contrary, we find that, with lamentable inconsistency in the few instances where the endeavour was made by proprietors to christianize their slaves, according to their own belief and form of worship, the opposition to the measure was so strong, that it led to repeated prohibitory laws, some of which possess the harshest features of persecution.² I allude to the pious, though unsuccessful exertions of the early colonists of the Society of Friends. Theirs is the praise of having first attempted, amidst obloquy and suffering, to preach the gospel in this island to the heathen African slave.

Nearly about this time, a clergyman³ of the Church of England, distinguished by his connexion with the most important college in the university of Oxford, ar-

² Hall's, Laws, No. 64.

³ Rev. Morgan Godwyn, student of Christ Church.

rived in this colony, and earnestly endeavoured to obtain the acknowledgment that the African was one of the human species, and therefore, as descended from Adam, entitled to be admitted into the blessings of the gospel covenant which⁴ was ratified by the blood of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. His efforts were openly opposed by the lay proprietors in Barbados; nor have we reason to believe that he received much active co-operation from his brethren in the ministry. His individual and unaided exertions were consequently almost entirely fruitless; and he has recorded his failure in a work which may still be read with a melancholy interest.

The Moravians, at a later period,⁵ entered on the instruction of the slaves in our West Indian settlements; and though forced to endure many difficulties and se-

⁴ Appendix B.

⁵ In 1732. In the Danish West India Islands. In 1754 in Jamaica. In 1756 in Antigua.

vere privations in the prosecution of their pious undertaking, yet by quiet perseverance, and a conciliatory and yielding deportment, they succeeded where a more uncompromising zeal would probably have failed. Their rule of conduct in the West Indies has been to "labour in stillness," and though this stillness may in some instances be identified with the absence of practical and effective instruction, yet even their opponents must allow that they were among the earliest in the field, and that they have borne much of the burden and heat of the day. The results of their labours have established the fact, that a Christian slave is far more valuable than one who remains in a state of heathen ignorance, and that the contentment inculcated by the gospel is the best safeguard against insurrection and bloodshed.

Of the Dissenting teachers who have more recently toiled, with a partial and qualified success, in the same spiritual wilderness, it is difficult to speak without

incurring the suspicion of either too much liberality, where there may be cause for censure, or of too little, where forbearance may be required, or even commendation be due. The zealous minister of our church in these lands will seldom complain of having his sphere of usefulness narrowed by the exertions of these seceders from our communion. In some of the colonies the field is too wide to admit of much collision; and if in others, with a culpable intrusion they attempt *to build on another man's foundation*,⁶ the orthodox doctrines, and primitive discipline of our church, maintained earnestly and discreetly, will scarcely fail to secure the ascendancy. I deprecate the virulence of party spirit. The clamours of intolerance too often arise from the consciousness of inferior zeal, and where reproaches are vehement, it may be fair to inquire whether there is not as much fault in the remissness of one party, as in the obtrusiveness of the other.

⁶ Rom. xv. 20.

I ought not to dismiss the subject without adding a few words on dissent in general. I speak in no uncharitable spirit, and my desire is to use also the language of charity.

It may be assumed, without much fear of contradiction, that the ecclesiastical establishment of a country is entitled not only to acquiescence, but even to zealous support, whenever it is founded on the authority of God's word, or on the known discipline of the early church. Any departure from the truths of the gospel, any demands on our belief or practice, which are inconsistent with the plain language of the scriptures, any attempt to teach and impose for doctrines the commandments of men, will authorize—not *the hatred which stirreth up strifes*,⁷ for this is unchristian—but quiet remonstrance; or, if this fails, the peaceable separation from that church which clearly and obstinately continues in error.

⁷ Prov. x. 12.

*Though we, says the Apostle, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.**

It was when papal Rome preached and enforced another gospel than that which the apostles had preached, that the reformed churches of Europe, and England was prominent among them, withdrew from the spiritual rule which she had abused, and exercised the right of self-judgment.

But when in all essential matters the Word of God is made the rule of doctrine in the constitution of a church; when there are no leading errors, no oppressive forms, no harsh and uncharitable practices, it becomes the duty of every member of the community to submit for conscience sake. Any hasty and capricious separation is schismatical, and is immediately destructive of that unity and peace

* Gal. i. 8.

which Christ so frequently and so earnestly enjoined on his followers.

I presume not to judge those, however mistaken in their opinions, who, after a calm and dispassionate inquiry, conscientiously, and from motives purely disinterested, dissent from our church. Much less should I consider any act of violence, or any spirit of hostility against them, justified in a sincere follower of Him who was meek and lowly, and required his disciples to love even their enemies. We may pray for them. We may try with all meekness and sobriety to convince them ; but we cannot, without identifying ourselves with the Church of Rome in some of its worst and most unchristian practices, take up the sword of persecution against them, and endeavour to extort from them an unwilling obedience.⁹

⁹ "There is nothing certainly more unreasonable, more inconsistent with the rights of human nature, more contrary to the spirit and precepts of the Christian religion, more iniquitous and unjust, more im-

When I look around me and behold various denominations of Christians, all labouring to attain the same great object—all striving to be the instruments of giving light to them that *sit in darkness and in the shadow of death*¹—though some with less knowledge, and in a temper less disciplined than others; I grieve not at the sight. I grieve when any are found who *cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which we have received*²—but I grieve not at seeing *the door of faith opened to the heathen* in our land by ministers of other denominations. St. Paul could say, *Some indeed preach Christ of envy and strife, and some also of good will . . . What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will*

politic, than persecution. It is against natural religion, revealed religion, and sound policy.”—LORD MANSFIELD.

¹ Luke i. 79.

² Rom. xvi. 17.

*rejoice.*³ There are rents in the church universal. The *Christian will pray* that they reach not to the foundation—that they affect not the corner-stone. Various are the branches which shoot forth from the parent and sustaining vine. *The Christian will rejoice* if even the least vigorous and perfect are enabled, through the blessing of God, to bear fruit.

I have noticed the unwillingness of the first holders of slave property to extend a saving knowledge of the gospel to the imported African. We might infer from allusions to the subject by early writers on the West Indies, that a mistaken interpretation⁴ of the laws relating to colonial slavery greatly increased this indisposition to supply the spiritual wants of the slave. I have spoken of the conduct of the Friends as a praiseworthy exception. I should be unjust were I not to admit that from time to time, individuals of our own communion were desirous of convey-

³ Phil. i. 15.

⁴ Appendix C.

ing to their slaves a knowledge of the truths, and a practical sense of the duties, of religion. But they either miscalculated the appropriate means of obtaining an influence in spiritual matters over the African mind, or they wanted firmness of purpose to enable them to persevere amidst the ridicule of their neighbours, and the disappointment which attended a first attempt. The result too frequently led to the assertion that the negro was debased by an almost brutal incapacity, and was not susceptible of those religious feelings and impressions which are characteristic of a rational being, and thus a plausible excuse was afforded for the dereliction of a positive precept. It is also not impossible that among the profligate and irreligious many were found who were unwilling that the negro should exhibit a sincerity of belief, and a corresponding uprightness of practice, to which his master was a stranger, and they therefore strenuously opposed every attempt to me-

liorate his character by the influence of Christianity.⁵

It has been asserted, and I fear not without reason, that the ministers of the established church in these colonies have seldom been distinguished, until lately, for their zeal in preaching the gospel to the slave inhabitants of their parishes. The laity scrupled to regard this part of the population as falling within the spiritual care of the parochial minister, and the minister himself paid too great a deference to these worldly and unholy scruples. *The fear of man which bringeth a snare,*⁶ was often stronger with him than the fear of God.

These times are happily passed. The assertion is no longer openly made, that the African is degraded below the level of human nature,⁷ and is therefore neither qualified nor designed for the enjoyment of the blessings of the gospel. The advocates for his admission into

⁵ Appendix D. ⁶ Prov. xxix. 25. ⁷ Appendix E.

the church are no longer withstood on the ground that he is not of the same descent with the European; nor are arguments now brought forward to invalidate the declaration of St. Paul, that *God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.*^s The most superficial examination of our coloured schools will enable us to repel the insinuation of an inferiority of intellect in the negro. I can assert, with the confidence arising from long and attentive observation, that, with equal advantages, he shows a capacity equal in every respect to that of his white brethren for mental improvement, and for all the moral excellencies which distinguish man from the beasts of the field.

This truth is not new to our parochial clergy, and it has led irresistibly to the conclusion, that the minister dares not, without a glaring and an unpardonable dereliction of his duty, neglect the spiri-

^s Acts xvii. 26.

tual instruction of the negro population. The tie which binds him to the faithful performance of the work committed to him cannot be capriciously dissolved. ALL persons who reside within the limits of his parish, are under his ministerial care; and he dares not, without violating the most solemn engagements by which man can be bound, and to which he is pledged in the presence of the great Searcher of hearts, renounce this charge, or evade the duties annexed to it, by any mental reservation of his own, or even by the concurrent and avowed approval of others.

I have said that the ministers of the established church, who resided formerly in these colonies, have been charged with neglecting the spiritual interests of their brethren of a darker complexion. The charge, however, cannot be extended to the clergy of the mother country. Earnest and repeated were the appeals of our bishops and pastors in behalf of the un-

instructed negro. The anniversary sermons,⁹ preached before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, abound with exhortations on the duty of teaching the slave the truths of our religion, and admitting him by baptism to the promised mercies of the gospel. I shall select one, which although long for a quotation, is, however, so clearly illustrative of the view entertained by our church on this subject, that I cannot refrain from bringing it before you. It is from a sermon¹ preached by Bishop Fleetwood, in the year 1710, before the assembled rulers of our church; and if some of the expressions should be considered harsh in an address from this pulpit,

⁹ See more particularly sermons preached by Archbishops Secker, Moore, and Manners; by Bishops Berkeley, Gibson, Claggett, Butler, Drummond, Green, Tomline, and Porteus, and by Dean Stanhope.

¹ This sermon was published by the Society, and widely distributed in our colonies.

we must remember that those expressions were applied to the state of our colonies more than a hundred years ago, and it is injurious to the character of our inhabitants to suppose that they are calculated to give offence in our own times.

After speaking of the neglected condition of the slaves in all that regarded their religious instruction, and the remissness, and in many cases the unwillingness, of their masters to have them baptized, he indignantly asks, “ What do these people think of Christ? what of their slaves? what of themselves?—What do they think of Christ? that he who came from heaven to purchase to himself a church with his own precious blood, should sit contented, and behold with unconcern those who profess themselves his servants, excluding from its gates those who would gladly enter if they might. One may ask with indignation, what such people think of Christ? But it is far more proper to say,

they think not at all of him. For if they would consider him in any quality or capacity whatever, as *Saviour, Lawgiver, Head of his Church, or Judge*, they would no more venture to lay an impediment in any one's way to conversion, than they would throw themselves into the fire deliberately. It would be as hard for them to give an account of what they think of those unhappy creatures whom they use thus cruelly. They see them equally the workmanship of God with themselves; endued with the same faculties and intellectual powers; bodies of the same flesh and blood, and souls as certainly immortal. These people were made to be as happy as themselves, and are as capable of being so; and however hard their condition be in this world, with respect to their captivity and subjection, they were to be as just and honest, as chaste and virtuous, as godly and religious as themselves. They were bought with the same price; purchased with the same blood

of Christ their common Saviour and Redeemer; and in order to all this, they were to have the means of salvation put into their hands; they were to be instructed in the faith of Christ, to have the terms and conditions fairly offered and proposed to them. Let any of these cruel masters tell us what part of all these blessings were not intended for their unhappy slaves by God, purchased for them by the blood of Christ, and which they are not equally capable of enjoying with themselves! What account then will these masters give of *themselves*, who were the occasion, and the instruments of bringing these unhappy people from a country where the name of Christ is never heard, or called upon, into a country where Christians govern all, and Christ is called their Lord and Master, and yet will not permit these slaves to be instructed, and become the servants of this heavenly master; who bring them as it were into sight of the waters of life, and

then withhold them from receiving any benefit from them ! They hope, it is likely, God will be merciful to these unhappy creatures, though they themselves will not be so. Their hope is good ; but they have reason to fear God may deny that mercy to themselves which they deny to others ; and no man living can assign a better and more justifiable cause for God's withholding mercy from a Christian, than that Christian withholding the mercy of Christianity from an unbeliever.'

I believe I am right in assuming that the sentiments expressed in this passage have always been common to the clergy of the established church in England ; and I trust I may add, that they would be echoed at the present moment by every minister of our church, now exercising the sacred functions of his office in the West Indies. They would be echoed also with, I believe, the sanction and concurrent voice of every respectable and enlightened lay proprietor. Strong is

the conviction of the great body of our colonial clergy, and it is no longer brooded over in secret, that *necessity is laid upon them to preach the gospel to every creature*² within the sphere of their ministerial charge. They are zealous with a discreet and disciplined zeal in effecting the establishment and proper regulation of schools; in encouraging domestic instruction, and in promoting the erection of places of worship in number and size proportionate to the population of their parishes.

The demands on their time, and attention, and personal labour, are still most urgent. Much of our spiritual soil is even now without culture, or any visible improvement. Though the work has been commenced, and has made a perceptible, and even a satisfying progress, yet it is far from being complete. Many who live around us, and are daily before our eyes, are aliens from the church of Christ. Though the light of the gospel shines in

² 1 Cor. ix. 16; Mark xvi. 15.

the land, its rays penetrate not to them. Though the streams of living water flow, they drink not of it. Yet to them as well as to us is the promise offered. To them as well as to us, *the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*³

The mandate, PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE,⁴ is of universal obligation. No sincere believer, however private his station, or apparently inadequate his means of acting, will withdraw himself from the duty imposed by this last command of his Saviour. He is not required to preach openly, and before the congregation; to perform in his own person those functions which exclusively belong to the authorized minister of the gospel. He is not in the figurative but intelligible and expressive language of Scripture, *a watchman*⁵ set over the

³ Rev. xxii. 17.

⁴ Mark xvi. 15.

⁵ Ezek. iii. 17.

people—a *messenger*⁶ of the church of Christ—a *steward of the mysteries of the gospel*.⁷ but he is bound, as a BELIEVER IN CHRIST, to support and zealously co-operate with those who are ambassadors for Christ, to whom God has committed the word of reconciliation.⁸ No worldly or mercenary scruples of his own; no sanction afforded by the public voice, chiming in with his own previous indisposition to exertion, or with even a leaning on his part to obstruct the progress of the gospel, can absolve him from the unquestionable duty of assisting to win souls to Christ, and to convert the sinner from the error of his way.

I speak thus of the duty of Christian believers throughout the whole world. The obligation is surely not withdrawn or diminished in these colonies. The largeness of the population uneducated, and often most demoralized; their superstitious practices associated with the re-

⁶ 2 Cor. viii. 23. ⁷ 1 Cor. iv. 1. ⁸ 2 Cor. v. 19.

mains of a heathen creed ; or what perhaps is even worse, their absolute ignorance of any kind or form of religion, and their almost brutal indifference to the state, whether present or future, of their immortal souls—above all, their condition of entire dependence on the will of others, which enthrals the mind even more than the body, and incapacitates it for spontaneous exertion ; all combine to throw a more than ordinary share of responsibility on those who exercise authority over them, and to increase the obligation to make known among them the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ.

To those of my brethren whose lot it has been to be born and nurtured in bondage, I would offer, before I conclude, a few words of advice. You who are at present within these walls, and are hearers of this discourse, have enjoyed, it is presumed, the advantages of a Christian education, afforded you by masters whose anxiety for your welfare has extended to

the salvation of your souls. Let not, then, so pious a work, springing from the best and purest of motives, be frustrated by any wilful misconduct; any hardened unbelief; any obstinate impenitence on your parts. Your legal owners and proprietors have discharged their duty towards you in this momentous affair. Let the slave fail not in the duty which he owes to himself. To his master he is bound by a heavy debt of gratitude for bringing him out of spiritual darkness and the bondage of sin, and directing him on the road to life and immortality. The most powerful incentives to good conduct, whether they arise from a desire to return benefits for benefits received, or from a sense of the duty which he owes to his God and his Saviour, or from feelings of self-interest, (for his eternal welfare depends now, under God's restraining and directing grace, on the use he is disposed to make of the blessings vouchsafed to him,) every imaginable in-

ducement and persuasion to perform his duty towards God and towards man, ought to be present to him, and to give a holy bias to his thoughts and to his actions. Let him pray to God for the assistance needful to support him in his Christian course, and to gain for him the high prize of his calling. Let him pray that, "forasmuch as without him he is not able to please him, he would mercifully grant that his Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule his heart." If he be sincere in his prayer, and if by faith he cleave to the Lord Jesus, then let him not repine at the bondage of this transitory life, *for he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freed man*;⁹ he has become, as far as concerns his eternal interests, *no longer a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ, according to the promise, for we are all the children of God by faith in Christ*

⁹ 1 Cor. vii. 22.

*Jesus,*¹ and neither country nor descent, neither condition nor complexion, will exclude any whom God *has translated into the kingdom of his dear Son,*² from the inheritance of the saints in light; for the civil and political distinctions of society are unknown to the church; *there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: but we are all one in Christ Jesus.*³

¹ Gal. iv. 7.² Col. i. 13.³ Gal. iii. 28.

LECTURE II.

THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL IN THE WEST INDIES.

(Preached at the Cathedral, Barbados, Jan. 22, 1832.)

2 THESS. iii. 1.

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.

THE subject of my last lecture led to a brief consideration of the introduction of the religion of Christ, first, into the mother country, and at a later period, when the discovery of Columbus opened a new world to the spirit of adventure, into these distant and valuable appendages to the British empire. It was painful to me to advert to the culpable indifference, which, for almost two centuries, had

been a barrier to the reception of the gospel by the slave population of the British possessions in the West Indies, and to notice, in some instances, the undisguised and persecuting hostility to the religious and moral improvement of this portion of our fellow creatures. It was not in a spirit of unkindness, or with any view to excite feelings of irritation, that I drew your attention to evils so indefensible, of the times that are past. A recurrence to the history of faults committed by those who have lived before us is calculated to guard us against similar failures in our own duty ; and though the past is irrevocable, and can therefore only be the subject of regret, yet the future is within our power, and former omissions may, in some degree, be compensated by a double portion of diligence exercised by ourselves, and by those who succeed us.

In continuation of the subject, I propose now to examine the system of instruction hitherto pursued in these colo-

nies, and to state the success which has attended the attempt to bring our slave population into subjection to the law of Christ. I shall unavoidably be led to notice what is still defective in this important work ; and it will be my duty freely to express my opinion on the means which may be adopted, without detriment to any private interests, and with unquestionable good to the community at large, for giving *free course* to the word of the Lord among your slaves and dependents.

The instruction afforded by catechists, under the superintendence of the Bishop of the diocese, although retarded by local obstacles, has been productive of evident and acknowledged good. I mean not to say that this mode of imparting to the negro the first principles of our religion had not been attempted previously to the exercise of episcopal authority in these islands ; but that which was before confined and partial in its operation, has become, under the regulations introduced by our

diocesan, comparatively general, and far more effective.

I am ready to admit that catechetical instruction is imperfect as a permanent system of teaching, and is very inadequate to the spiritual wants of the negro population around us : still with all its imperfection and disadvantages, it has been the means of working a perceptible improvement in the moral character and habits of many of our slaves. Where before there was almost total darkness, there are now many cheering rays of light ; where before the name of God and Christ was seldom heard, but in the coarsest imprecations, there is now not unfrequently a firm persuasion, and sometimes an influential belief of the vital truths of revelation.

There is evidently an increased desire on the part of the slaves to join in the public services of the church, and we even behold them approaching, with every mark of sincere devotion, the table

of the Lord. In former times, (I speak from the report of those whose recollection will go back to the period of almost complete spiritual darkness among this class of our brethren,) their attendance in the house of God was very rare, and, except in the principal towns, neither expected nor desired. The limited accommodation of the country churches almost excluded them there, from a participation in the rites of public worship.

It was with a view to meet the influx of the slave and free coloured inhabitants into our churches, that additional places of worship, open to the free and the slave, to the white and the black, have recently been erected in this and in some of the neighbouring islands. These consecrated buildings, lately the ornament and just pride of this colony, and a pleasing evidence of the increase of piety among our people, have sunk under the desolating storm¹ of the past year. The

¹ Appendix F.

“besom of destruction” which swept so fearfully over the land, has made of them a heap of ruins. Their downfall is a subject of deep and general lamentation, but we must not relinquish the hope that the same pious feelings which led in the first instance to their erection, will, if the means are attainable, prompt the inhabitants of the colony to replace them, without any decrease in number, or diminution in size.²

In enumerating the means by which the word of God is made more generally known in the land, I ought not to omit the improved tone and character of preaching among our clergy. The cold and unscriptural appeals to virtue which levelled the discourses of the Christian

² I have the satisfaction of being able to state, that since this sermon was preached, through the liberal assistance afforded by private subscriptions and by pecuniary grants from certain of the religious societies in England, nearly all the chapels will be rebuilt. Some have been already opened for divine service. The churches are still in ruins.

minister to the standard of mere gentile exhortation, are giving place to the sound and influential doctrines of our holy religion. The *dry bones*³ of a heathen morality are now animated by the *breath* of the gospel, and Christ crucified is no longer forgotten by the preacher, or revealed by him, but partially to an untaught and unenlightened congregation.

I may observe also, that, generally, in discourses from the pulpit, there is a greater adaptation to the capacity and information of the least instructed of our hearers. These have yet to learn the first principles, the earliest rudiments of the religion of Christ. They are as babes, who must be fed with milk,⁴ with the elementary and most intelligible doctrines of the gospel. They must be taught that there is a just and holy God, of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity⁵—that man is a sinner, very far gone from

³ Ezek. xxxvii. 4.

⁴ 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.

⁵ Hab. i. 13.

original righteousness, and therefore a vessel of wrath and fitted to destruction⁶—that while thus lying in wickedness, and with *the judgment of death* upon him, a Saviour is offered to him in Jesus Christ the Son of God, who hath *suffered for his sins, the just for the unjust*⁷—that *by grace he is saved; and that not of himself: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast*⁸—and that every required aid in obtaining and preserving this grace, is supplied by the Holy Spirit, and is granted to all who truly repenting of their former sins, and having a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, ask for it humbly and fervently in prayer. Thus *being made free from sin, and become servants to God, they have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*⁹

These are the essential and fundamental truths of our religion. They can be

⁶ Rom. ix. 22.

⁷ 1 Peter iii. 18.

⁸ Eph. ii. 8, 9.

⁹ Rom. vi. 22.

rendered intelligible, even to the most ignorant among rational and responsible beings, and they involve belief in God the Father who has created us, in the Son who has redeemed us, and in the Holy Ghost who sanctifies every real believer.

Whenever the minister has been earnest in enforcing these leading doctrines of the gospel; and has drawn his instructions from the scriptures of inspiration, and not from *the enticing words of man's wisdom*, he has seldom failed to create a desire in those who most need his teaching, of frequenting the house of God, and partaking in the services of our church.

And let it not be thought by the more improved and enlightened part of our congregations, that because these truths are familiar to them, their declaration from the pulpit with the earnestness of solemn and reiterated admonition, is not required also for their edification and growth in grace. It is a painful consideration, that the advantages arising out of the Christian dis-

pensation are often not duly appreciated by even the most intelligent class of our hearers. Though admitted by the understanding as truths, they are seldom brought home to the heart with the feelings of joy and thankfulness, which ought to spring from this inestimable boon from the Creator to his creatures. The light which burst forth amidst the moral darkness and the shadow of death, having lost the excitement of novelty, is now viewed with much of the indifference with which we regard the ordinary phenomena of nature; and that glorious luminary who arose *with healing in his wings*,¹ though he still continues to spread far and wide the beams which nourish and support spiritual life, shines, however, like the material sun, without a due acknowledgment of his bounties, and often even without notice from those who are indebted to him for blessings incalculably greater than light and heat, and even daily existence.

¹ Malachi iv. 2.

The increased number of our schools, and the more approved system of education pursued in them, have contributed much to give free course to the word of God in our colonies. In every school supported at the expense of his Majesty's government in England, or from the funds of the Society for the Conversion of Negro Slaves, free and slave children are indiscriminately admitted, and equally share in the advantages of the instruction afforded.

The earliest attempt to give gratuitous school instruction to the coloured children in this colony, was made by an officer² in his Majesty's service. During a short residence on duty in Barbados, he observed, with concern, the ignorance and vice, to which, from want of an early education, this class of the inhabitants were peculiarly exposed. Nor was he satisfied with the mere expression of pity and unavailing regret at their condition. By en-

² Lieut. Lugger, Royal Artillery, in 1818.

gaging the assistance of others in his work of charity, he succeeded in establishing a school for the coloured poor, which, independently of its acknowledged and extensive usefulness, has the merit of being the first institution of the kind in this part of the West Indies. Many who are at present within these walls, are mainly, if not solely indebted to this school for the knowledge they possess of the truths of our religion, and for the further instruction which has enabled them to obtain respectability and useful employment in life.

What was thus auspiciously begun by a layman, who adorned the profession of a soldier with the spirit and ardent zeal of a Christian, has been carried into extensive and efficient operation, by the present head of our church establishment in these colonies. There is now scarcely a town, I believe I may say scarcely a village, throughout the diocese, where a knowledge of the Christian duties, ac-

complicated with instruction in reading and writing, is not brought within reach both of the free coloured and of the slave inhabitants. I augur much lasting good, under the blessing of Providence, from these widely diffused, and well regulated schools in connexion with our church. The seed is there sown, which will, in due time, ripen into the fruit of practical holiness. The good may not be immediately and strikingly perceptible; “it will spring and grow up we know not how, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear;”³ our labour in the Lord shall not be in vain; it will show itself in the piety, righteousness, and personal increase of holiness.

I have now noticed some of the leading improvements, which, as far as they involve the advancement of true religion, have resulted from the combined influence of a new zeal inspired into our church establishment, and a partial relinquish

³ Mark iv. 27.

ment of the prejudices which before stood in the way of any effective instruction. I could easily mention other beneficial changes, such as the better observance of the sabbath, and the commencement of marriage among the slaves ; but as these are subjects of sufficient moment to demand our consideration, each in a separate lecture, I pass them by for the present.

I take a retrospect of what has been done, and thank my God that in his mercy he has at length visited the African descendant in these distant regions, and has opened to him the way of salvation. I thank my God that the indifference or the opposition of man is yielding to the power of the gospel, and that the word of the Lord is beginning to be known among the heathen of our own land.

My brethren, deem it not presumption in me, nor regard it as an undue stretch of my ministerial duties, if I freely, but in the spirit of Christian charity, declare to you from this place what yet remains

to be done, to give full efficiency to the preaching of the gospel among your people. Bear our exhortations with patience, and join with us in the prayer that the word of God *may have free course and be glorified among you.*⁴ The catechetical instruction of which I have spoken has been only partial in its operation. The want of adequate funds (for the pecuniary assistance obtained through local subscriptions is altogether trifling) has necessarily confined this mode of teaching within narrower limits than the urgency of the case demanded. The time also allowed from the labour of the estate has been generally insufficient, nor has the zeal of the proprietor and his subordinate agents always kept pace with our wishes, or even our reasonable expectations.

These impediments will account for the limited success which has attended the labours of our catechists on plantations. Even at the best, this mode of instruction

⁴ 2 Thess. iii. 1.

is but a commencement in religious knowledge, preparatory only to a more enlarged and more useful system arising out of it. The slaves must be taught to *read*, or the few precepts urged on them by the catechist, after long intervals of time, and often at seasons when their attention is distracted by bodily weariness, will either pass unheeded, or cause at best but a slight and transient impression.

In many of our West India Colonies there is no objection on the part of the proprietor to extend the privilege of reading to his slaves. The trial has been made repeatedly, and no evil has in any one instance resulted from it. On the contrary, the improved morality of the slave consequent on the increase of his religious knowledge, and on a greater respect for his own personal character, has even in a worldly and mercenary view, added greatly to his worth. But I urge not this as a constraining motive with the master. I would not press on

him inferior considerations, when those of the highest authority are ready at hand.

Search the scriptures^s is the command of our Lord and Saviour. Can the withholder of this necessary branch of instruction from his dependents read these words, or hear them read to his slaves, without being painfully reminded that he, as far as in him lies, prohibits them from obeying this mandate of their common Redeemer? Shall the minister offer up the petition to which every individual in the house of God is expected to assent, "Grant, blessed Lord, that we may read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest thy holy scriptures," when the master who is present knows that he has issued the command, 'Read not, mark not, learn not, and therefore inwardly digest not?' It is alleged in excuse, that instruction carried thus far may affect injuriously the master's interests, by affording the slaves an opportunity of reading works of a demoralizing

^s John v. 39.

and otherwise dangerous tendency. But this argument weighs not with him in the education of his own children; nor does he ever debar those who are connected with him by the ties of legitimate relationship, from the knowledge of reading and writing, through a dread that they may *possibly* turn this knowledge to a pernicious use. The apprehension is equally groundless in the case of his slaves. It is not the contingent and barely possible evil which ought to be contemplated, but the obvious and almost certain good; and what God has commanded, man may assuredly with safety perform.

Let us not be told in any land professedly Christian, that the attempt to improve the understanding, and increase the knowledge of the poor—even of the poorest, and meanest, and most abject among us—will render them discontented with their condition, and averse from the labour legally demanded at their hands.

Let us not be told that it will create new wants, awaken their dormant passions, and lead eventually to the violent disturbance of society, and the overthrow of the existing institutions which uphold it—for such have been among the evils anticipated from affording even the simplest instruction to our inferiors and dependents; and these apprehensions have not unfrequently been backed (more especially in this country) by the cold and repulsive advice, that we should let well alone, and not pretend to be wiser than our forefathers—advice which, if acted on in the world, would confine man for ever to the savage state—would interpose a barrier to every civil or moral improvement, and would destroy, or render useless, those faculties by which we are distinguished from the beasts of the field. The brute remains stationary in his habits, nor is one generation ever marked by superiority of knowledge to another; while it is the distinguishing privilege of man to be

progressive—to advance from the rudest state of ignorance to the highest improvement of his intellectual powers, and to all the enjoyments of cultivated and civilized life.

It may be assumed as an unquestionable truth, that no one will perform the duties of life, whether religious or moral, or social, whether public or private, the worse for knowing them. No one will become a careless or disobedient servant from being able to read in the writings inspired by God himself the following exhortation : — *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. Exhort servants to be obedient unto their masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Servants, be subject to your masters*

*with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*⁶

To promote the objects which I have strongly, but I would hope not obtrusively recommended, mere oral instruction is obviously insufficient. It may open the road, but it cannot bring the hearer to the desired end of the journey. It ought in every instance to be followed by the establishment of a school for the young on the plantation; and this school might be usefully conducted (under the superintendence of the proprietor and the minister of the parish) by some respectable tenant on the estate. I cannot regard the immediate agency of the book-keeper, or of others with a delegated authority, as desirable in the work of instruction. The teacher should appear in the character of the friend, and not of the task-master or punisher of the slaves.⁷ Above all, his moral character

⁶ Col. iii. 22. Titus ii. 9. 1 Peter ii. 18.

⁷ "It is obvious that the person who ministers in

should be free from reproach or exception. Subordinate instructors might easily be found among the slaves themselves, and they would require but little training to attain the necessary qualifications for assisting in, or even conducting, a school on the plantation.⁸

I consider the Sunday parochial school as an useful auxiliary to this plan of daily instruction for the young. The children whose age qualifies them for active employment in the field, and who therefore

the capacity of instructor to your negroes, should never appear in the light of a minister of oppression. It should be no part of his duty to urge them to their labour, or to superintend them in any of the processes of the plantation. He ought to show himself to them only under the character of a mediator and benefactor and moral guide."—*Practical Rules for the Management, &c., of Negro Slavery, by Dr. Collins, of St. Vincent.*

⁸ Schools of the description here recommended have recently been opened on some of the plantations in Barbados. I hope soon to see the number greatly increase.

remain no longer under the charge of the domestic teacher, may here keep up the knowledge they have gained in their earlier years, and may be taught, under the personal superintendence of their minister, "all things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health."

I have not sufficient personal knowledge of the success which has attended the establishment of infant schools in the mother country, to recommend positively and confidently their adoption in these colonies. But the arguments which have been brought forward in support of these new institutions, and which have led to their zealous patronage by the benevolent in our mother country, are at least as applicable to the condition of the poor in the West Indies; for where is the infant, in all that regards the moral discipline and controul of the mind, more untaught, than among our slave, and free coloured inhabitants; and where is the influence of early example more danger-

ous, than in the dwellings of the poor white, the poor free-coloured ; and the neglected slave of our land ? It is not in the precocious development of intellect, but in the early habits of industry, and obedience, and self-controul, that we are to look for the practical good of infant schools.⁹

I am satisfied that the religious improvement of the slaves would be greatly promoted, if the minister deemed it an essential part of his duty to visit the negro population of his parish in their huts—to enter into their little distresses with the earnest and kindly interest of a friend—and to show a readiness to assist them with his counsel, comfort them with the hopes and promises of the gospel, and promote by every legitimate and allowable means their temporal, no less than their spiritual welfare. It was in anticipation of benefits of this kind which the clergyman might be able to confer on the

⁹ Appendix G.

slaves under his ministerial charge, that the highly distinguished individual,¹ to whom the British West India Colonies generally, and this island in an especial degree, are so deeply indebted, enjoined that "the scholars maintained at his college, should be obliged to study and practise physic and chirurgery, as well as divinity; that by the apparent usefulness of the former to all mankind, they might both endear themselves to the people, and have the better opportunities of doing good to men's souls, whilst they were taking care of their bodies."

In these his parochial visits, the minister should appear in the character of the kind and sympathizing friend. He should throw aside all the authority which distinguishes the master from his slaves. I am anxious to avoid the expression of any opinion which may savour of harshness, or may expose me to the charge of being prejudiced myself, at a time when

¹ General Codrington.

I am endeavouring to subdue the prejudices of others ; but the subject now under consideration obliges me to declare that the faithful discharge of the duties of the minister in these colonies, is, in my judgment, incompatible with the active superintendence of slave property. If it were possible, I should rejoice to see every clergyman in the diocese unfettered with the possession, or even the controul, of a single slave.

No well-disposed person will deny that the minister may reasonably expect, and that he certainly ought to receive, the ready co-operation of the lay proprietors around him. The plantations, which often contain each a population not inferior to that of a moderate parish in England, should be open to him at all times. No unnecessary difficulties should impede his visiting the hut of the negro, and aiding him with ministerial advice and consolation. His endeavours to assemble the slaves in the house of God

on the sabbath should be backed by the master's authority, parentally exerted on the occasion. We are frequently told that any interference, even to the length of advice, on religious matters, is a controul which the master is unwilling to exercise over his slaves; and that it would be unpardonable severity to compel them to observe the sanctity of the sabbath, and to join in its religious services. But when the direct authority of the master coerces in every other respect the will and conduct of his dependents, it is no admissible excuse, that from feelings of humanity, the same authority is not exerted in promoting a due attention to their moral and religious duties. I would allow them the fullest liberty of conscience I would force none to adopt any opinions, or join in any outward form of worship, from which they are averse on principle. But since a vast majority of them are in the condition of children, with minds almost a perfect blank; untaught in any

religious creed, and unbiassed by any preconceived opinions or impressions, it surely is no outrage to their feelings, and no unauthorized and culpable stretch of power, to deal with them as we should not scruple to do with our own sons and daughters—to admonish, entreat, and even peremptorily require them to be moral in their habits, and observant of the prescribed forms of religion.

Nor can I omit to press earnestly on your consideration the duty of assembling your slaves each morning and evening for family or plantation prayer, that with one voice and in one common spirit of holiness, the blessing of God may be invoked on both master and servant. The congregated negroes will by this daily recurring service be taught to acknowledge their dependence on, and final responsibility to, their Creator; to rely on the atoning blood of Christ their Redeemer, and to make supplication for the sanctifying influence of the holy

Spirit, so that strength may be given them to continue in the way that leadeth to life everlasting.

My brethren, you are Christians yourselves. Your children and all who are near to you in relationship, and dear to you in affection, have been early admitted into Christ's church by baptism, and have been subsequently taught the duties and the obligations of the Christian faith. *Pray for us,*² nor be content with prayer alone : act zealously with us, that *the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified among your slaves, even as it is with you*, and with your children, for *it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones,*³ now entrusted to your charge, *should perish*.

It is the will and known command of the Almighty that every one, rich or poor, high or low, free or bond, should come to Jesus Christ for salvation ; and whoever keeps from his slaves and de-

, 2 Thess. iii. 1.

³ Matt. xviii. 14.

pendents the view of that blessed Redeemer, who came into the world that all men through him might be saved ; whoever refuses the waters of life to the spiritually thirsty, and allows those who are about him and are ministering by their labour to his comforts, to perish eternally *for lack of knowledge* ;⁴ that man obeys not, regards not his God and his Saviour. Awfully will the words sound in his ears, when he is asked at the great day of account and general retribution, “ Where are the souls committed to thy charge ? ” Thy God hath said, “ Let him that is athirst come, and let him take the water of life freely ; ” and hast thou interposed thy fleeting power, and said ‘ Come not, taste not ? ’ Thy Saviour offered himself for all men, for *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life* ;⁵ and hast thou declared, if not in words, yet in thy deeds,

⁴ Hosea iv. 6.⁵ John iii. 16.

that those over whom power was given thee, should not believe in the Saviour, should not even know that “he died for their sins, and rose again for their justification.” Where are the souls over whom thou hast exercised an almost unbounded controul, while with their bodies they were serving thee—those whom human laws made thy slaves, yet who are by creation and by redemption thy brethren?

The man whose conscience tells him, that those who were dependent on him, have, through his wilful neglect, died in utter ignorance of Christ and his religion, may well tremble at questions such as these.

But among those who now hear me, many, I would hope very many, will be able to reply, ‘Lord here are thine own. We have made them acquainted with thy Holy Word. We have ourselves taught them, or have carefully provided that others should teach them, in whom they were to believe, and what they were to

do, to obtain eternal life. If any have been lost, the fault is not ours ; for we were willing that they should be saved.’

My prayer is, that every proprietor or agent in the management of slave property may be able thus faithfully to account for the trust reposed in him. May the word of God, through their instrumentality, *have free course* where before it was impeded, *and be glorified* in this, and in every neighbouring colony.

LECTURE III.

THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY IN THE WEST INDIES.

(Preached at the Cathedral, Barbados, Feb.
12, 1832.)

MARK xi. 27.

The Sabbath was made for man.

THIS declaration of the divine author and finisher of our faith, implies that the observance of the sabbath, that is, of a day of rest from worldly employment, and of devotion to the service of the Almighty, is of universal and immutable obligation. The sabbath was not made, or set apart as peculiarly holy, for the Jews alone, but for MAN *of every kindred and tongue and nation*. When solemnly

promulgated to the assembled Israelites from Mount Sinai, it was only a renewal of the command already required; for before it pleased God to call Abraham from beyond the river, to make him the father of a peculiar people, and even in Paradise before the fall, it was enjoined to the common progenitor of us all, not only as a law but as a privilege. It is an institution for the benefit, of every human being, and this benefit, as far as their nature permits their participation in it, is mercifully permitted to extend to the brute creation. On this day no manner of work, unless proceeding from the call of piety, charity, or absolute necessity, is to be done by the master, or by the servant; and even the cattle are included within the enjoined respite from labour.

The objects of this divine institution are clearly the glory of God, and the good of man. After the Almighty had finished his six days' work of creation, he rested on the seventh day, and *because*

*that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made, he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.*¹ The blessing and the hallowing of the seventh day were therefore intended to commemorate the goodness of the Almighty in forming the world, and giving existence to all that is therein. We are reminded by the sacred rest of the sabbath, that the life which we at present enjoy, and every thing that supports this life, are to be referred to the first exercise of God's creative power upon earth. *Even the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, when the foundations of the earth were fastened and the corner stone thereof laid:*² and is it fitting that MAN, for whom this vast and beautiful fabric was raised, and to whom dominion was given *over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth,* that

¹ Gen. ii. 3.² Job xxxviii. 7.

man, himself the last and noblest of these works should remain indifferent to the day which the Almighty consecrated in remembrance of the completion of the creation.

But while God regarded his own glory in thus setting apart the sabbath as a day of holy rest, he had also an especial regard to the good of man. Our Saviour declared that the sabbath was made for man ; and though we are required to observe it as a day commemorative of the power and goodness of the Almighty displayed in the first creation of the world ; yet this observance is enjoined, not for the sake of the divine Legislator, (for God is far too exalted to need the praises of any of his creatures,) but as immediately and necessarily beneficial to man.

We are all born for immortality, and this our life of probation is only the forerunner of one future and eternal. Were we entirely to abstract our thoughts from the God to whom we are responsible, and

from the everlasting happiness or misery which is awarded to us beyond the grave, *according to that we have done in the body whether it be good or bad,*² our affections would be chained down to the world and its passing vanities, and no preparation would be made for communion with God, which must constitute through eternity the happiness and perfection of the soul.

It was partly to break asunder this undue attachment to the things of this life, that every seventh day is by God's appointment a day devoted to prayer and to the other services of religion. It is to prevent us from forgetting our God, and from being absorbed in the uninterrupted pursuit of earthly things, that fixed and recurring seasons are thus made holy by the Almighty, and appropriated to himself as an offering due from his rational creatures. Any attempt to frustrate this benevolent purpose of our Creator, and wilfully to

² 2 Cor. v. 10.

desecrate the portion of time which he has hallowed, invariably leads to the neglect of our best interests. It is followed by an exclusive regard for the perishable body, and a reckless unconcern for the immortal part of us—the surviving and imperishable soul. This is no imaginary evil. Its reality has been experienced, accompanied with some of the worst consequences of infidelity, wherever, in open violation of the command which requires us to keep one day in seven holy, the sabbath has been confounded with the other days of the week, and been employed in the ordinary business or diversions of life. It is still in the memory of many among us with what fearful strides irreligion followed the open and authorized neglect of the Lord's day in republican France; and closely associated with irreligion were many of the most appalling and disastrous scenes of that awful period.

I may further remark, that the design

of the Almighty in appointing the sabbath to be a day of holy rest, extended to the body as well as to the soul of man. I believe few will deny that an occasional cessation from toil is required for the health and due preservation of the animal frame. Incessant labour soon wears down the strongest constitution, and shortens the period granted as the ordinary term of human existence.

The exhaustion of the bodily strength of man by unremitting exertion in his daily employments, was obviated in the heathen world by the frequent celebration of festivals⁴ in honour of their false deities. And even among nations not blessed with the light of Revelation it is not unusual to find a seventh day set apart for rest. Possibly this is a traditionary custom originating in the divine command as given to the progenitor of the human race, or at least it results from the ascer-

⁴ Appendix H,

tained necessity of stated intervals of repose from the ordinary occupations of life. Its prevalence, however, be its origin what it may, is a proof of the benevolence and wisdom of the divine command, which enjoins, that on the sabbath man shall do no manner of work, neither he, nor his children, nor his servants, nor even the cattle that are his.

Daring, then, beyond the ordinary daring of disobedience, must be the conduct of him, who would resist a command thus dictated in mercy, and framed with an especial reference to his own good and to the good of those around him. He may say, as many in their presumption have said, or in their practice have seemed to say, I will judge for myself on the expediency of resting on the sabbath, nor will I submit even to the highest authority in a matter which effects my present interests. But to such an one we may well apply the Apostle's language: *Nay, but O man who art thou*

*that repliest against God?*⁵ Has the Almighty declared, that every returning seventh day should be given to rest and devotion; and shall man presume to say that it is not fitting? The Creator blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, and shall the creature annul the blessing, and pronounce that it shall not be sanctified?⁶

It is worthy of remark, that many moral duties are recommended in the Sacred Volume, which are not the subject of a specific command in either of the two tables; while the injunction to keep holy the sabbath day is expressly recorded in the decalogue. The inference has been drawn, that this duty involves an obligation more peremptory and constraining than those which have not the same mark of distinction affixed to them. Of this at least we are certain, that from its having been written by the finger of God on the tables of stone, equally with the other commands, which are allowed to be

⁵ Romans xi. 20.

⁶ Appendix I.

binding on all men, it is clearly a moral précept, and therefore of perpetual and universal obligation.

The departure from the strict letter of the original command, and the substitution of the first day instead of the seventh as holy to the Lord, may seem to some to militate against the perpetuity of the obligation. A change indeed has been made, but not without reason, or due authority; nor does that change affect the moral part of the précept. *The sabbath was made for man:*⁷ and the specific object of it is equally provided for by the observance of a seventh day of rest and devotion, whether that day be the first or the last. The seventh was, no doubt, originally observed, but as the human race spread themselves over the earth, there must necessarily have arisen a variation in the time of keeping it: since in some regions the day is beginning at the very same moment when in others it is

⁷ Mark ii. 27.

ending. It is therefore evident that the moral obligation of the precept cannot consist in the undeviating observance of the same identical period, and that the day need not be the same in all places and all ages of the world.

The sabbath, as it was promulgated to the Israelites from Mount Sinai, while it comprehended whatever is morally binding on man, possessed certain distinctive features which belonged to them as the peculiar people of God. The reason assigned for their keeping one day in the week holy, is purely national, and it therefore may thus far be classed among those precepts of the law which are of a civil and political, rather than of a moral character.* The severe punishments consequent on the breach of the Jewish sabbath are equally peculiar and national. "There was a double reason rendered by God why the Jews should keep that sabbath which they did; one special, as to a

* Deut. v. 15.

seventh day, to show they worshipped that God who was the Creator of the world; the other individual, to signify their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage from which that seventh day was dated.”⁹

The Christian sabbath, in which the moral obligation of our resting on and hallowing one day in the seven, is fully preserved, unites both the general and the special reason; for while with the patriarchs we commemorate the creation, we celebrate also our Lord’s triumphant rising from the grave, whereby he delivered us from spiritual slavery of which the Egyptian house of bondage was a type. Thus it combines, with the acknowledgment of the common benefit of the original creation, the memory “of the transcendent blessing of our new creation to the hope of everlasting life, of which our Lord’s resurrection on the first day of the week is a sure pledge and evidence.”¹

⁹ Pearson.

¹ Horsley.

The deliverance of the Israelites from their house of temporal bondage will bear no comparison with the spiritual freedom purchased for all who believe in and obey him by the Captain of our salvation; and the glory of God, in producing all things out of nothing, is infinitely surpassed by the gospel scheme of salvation, whereby the sinner becomes a new creature in Christ,² and puts on *the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*³ The sabbath has, therefore, been changed into the Lord's day, "that as the one did continually bring to mind the former world finished by creation, so the other might keep us in perpetual remembrance of a far better world, begun by him who came to restore all things, to make both heaven and earth new."⁴

The practice of the apostles in assembling for the performance of their reli-

² 2 Cor. v. 17.

³ Eph. iv. 24.

⁴ Hooker.

gious duties on the first day of the week—the sanction given to it by our Lord after his resurrection—its early designation as his day ; and this by the beloved disciple, Rev. i. 10. and its continued observance throughout every subsequent age, as the Christian sabbath, combine to confer upon it a sanctity more solemn, and a validity more binding than can be claimed by any ordinance of man. Every human being is bound by the original command of God to rest on one day in seven. Every Christian is bound to rest on the Lord's day. "All days," says St. Jerome, "are alike of the Lord's creation ; but other days may belong to the Jews, may belong to heretics, may belong to Gentiles or the heathen ; but the Lord's day is the day of the resurrection, is the day of Christians—is our day.⁵

The inhabitants of our West India Colonies have long had to contend against

⁵ In Psalm cxvii. Sub. Nom. Hieron.

the reproach, that notwithstanding their outward profession of the religion of Christ, and their boasted adherence to the established churches of the mother country, the breach of the enjoined sanctity of the sabbath, which these churches recognize as a divine ordinance, has been encouraged among the greater part of their population. I rejoice to be able to say that the evil which, but a few years ago, notoriously existed in this island, and which by every sincere Christian was justly regarded as an offence both to God and to man, has been in a great measure redressed by a recent legislative enactment; and I express my conviction when I declare that the compulsory violation of the Lord's day is now *almost*⁶ unknown

⁶ I say "almost," because by the existing law the owners of estates are expressly allowed to employ their slaves in the casking of sugar until ten o'clock on Sunday morning. It is with regret I am obliged to notice this tolerated and legalized infringement of the sanctity of the sabbath.

among us. I consider that the present prohibitory laws, if duly enforced by the magistracy, are sufficient to prevent any very flagrant interruption to its sanctity. The marketing and huckstering which still partially exist, are rather connived at than publicly allowed; and from a mistaken kindness, or perhaps from some remaining prejudices in favour of a long-established usage, the evil is tolerated even in defiance of the law. The instances of offence are, however, less common than formerly, and we may hope that with the increase of religious knowledge among us, our people will assemble on the sabbath, not to traffic and barter their goods, but to hear the word of God, and to join in congregational prayer.

I have reason to think that the indecent revellings and the disorderly and demoralizing dances on the Lord's day, formerly so common in this colony, are at present of comparatively rare occurrence.

Wherever they take place, the offence lies more at the door of the master who encourages, by his permission, this breach of the sabbath, than of the slave who is, perhaps, ignorant that he is violating a divine command. A simple order from the proprietor, or from any of his subordinate white agents, would immediately abate the evil.

Notwithstanding these occasional and unchecked irregularities, evidently subversive of a positive Christian duty, I am bound in introducing the subject to declare, that in few of the colonies in the whole range of our West Indian possessions are the external decencies of the Lord's day more generally observed, or the obligation of joining in public worship more fully recognized, than in this island. I have noticed, in a previous lecture, the duty incumbent on the proprietor to encourage his slave population to partake on this day of the public ordinances of religion, and to require, under a

salutary coercion, their attendance in the house of God. The increasing congregations of this class of our inhabitants on the sabbath, and the chapels which have recently been built for the acknowledged purpose of accommodating within their walls the negroes of the neighbouring estates, are an earnest that the master is beginning to appreciate justly the influence of the gospel on the mind of his slave, and that the sabbath will, at no distant time, be observed among us, not only as a day of rest from bodily toil, but of willing and active employment in the services due to the Almighty.

I wish not, by instituting a comparison between this and the neighbouring colonies with which I am officially connected, to express any harsh or uncharitable censure of abuses which, though in a great measure discontinued here, are still tolerated in some of them with a demoralizing effect on the great body of the people. In this island the cultivation

of the garden or provision grounds of the negro on the sabbath is not required for his support, and it therefore is no blameable severity to enforce the laws which prohibit it. In the colonies alluded to, the necessity imposed on him of providing by extra labour for his maintenance, often compels him to work on the Sunday. But in this, and in every other case, in which the violation of the Lord's day is unavoidable, the guilt devolves on the master.

The Sunday market has been abolished by law in this island, though in the excepting clauses of the prohibitory act a licence is allowed for the sale of perishable articles, which, I am afraid, is open to great abuse. The duty of putting an end to the unchristian usage of marketing on the Lord's day is now generally acknowledged throughout the British West Indies. The desire, however, still remains in some of the colonies, to compromise the duty by legalizing the partial

breach of the sabbath, and authorizing by a specific enactment, public trafficking in the markets until ten or eleven o'clock.' There is in this palliative of the evil something more injurious to religion and good morals, than the practice which existed before, of devoting the entire day to secular occupations. The offence, though connived at, and even sanctioned by custom, was, then, always regarded *as an offence*. It has now the solemn sanction of law. The statutes and ordinances of *man* are presumptuously arrayed against the positive and known command of God.

It has been urged in this colony—and possibly in other parts of the West Indies we may hear the same excuse—that the master is unwilling to abridge the comforts of his slaves, by depriving them of the little gains which the privilege of a Sunday market affords them, or by for-

, In St. Vincent's until ten, and in Dominica, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Jamaica, until eleven.

bidding the recreation of the Sunday revel or dance. There is something selfish in this boasted kindness. The master is favouring himself at the expense of God. He refuses to grant any portion of the time which is his own, while he gives away, with an ostentatious liberality, the time which is not his but his Lord's. His own work is rigidly exacted, while the neglect of God's work is tolerated and sometimes encouraged on the day which He claims as his.

I have spoken of the profanation of the Lord's day by the uneducated part of our population. In this violation of the Divine command, they are unhappily countenanced to a certain extent by the practice of many of their superiors in rank and intelligence. I need not dwell on the pernicious influence of bad example. It must be evident that when those, who have had all the advantages of early instruction in the duties required of them as Christians, and who, moreover, possess the entire

and uncontrolled use of six days out of the seven for business or pleasure, devote the Lord's day not to the public exercise of prayer and to private communion with their God; but to the settling of their worldly concerns, or to the dissipation of convivial parties, the evil exists in an aggravated form. It is not merely the master who is a sufferer by it, but the slave as well, who is led away by his master's example. Nor can the excuse be pleaded, that the well-informed and the more affluent among us err in this matter through ignorance. They know their Lord's will, and their opposition to it is therefore presumptuous sin. And what is the direct and almost unavoidable consequence to them of this habitual profanation of the sabbath? We behold it in their speedy contempt of all religious observances and obligations—we behold it in their disregard of almost every duty which is enjoined by the Almighty, and which cha-

acterizes the sincere follower of Christ. And when results thus widely destructive of the best interests of man arise from the breach of the fourth commandment, shall it be said that I am actuated by feelings of undue austerity, when I denounce the judgments of God against the sabbath-breaker; and when I raise a warning voice to prevent the continuance of a sin so fraught with evil, both to the individuals guilty of it, and to the community by whom it is sanctioned?

We read in the sacred volume the following words:—May they not, without any strained interpretation, be made applicable to many of our colonial possessions in this part of the world? *In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine-grapes and figs and ALL MANNER OF BURDENS which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I TESTIFIED AGAINST THEM IN THE DAY WHEREIN*

THEY SOLD VICTUALS. *There dwelt men of Tyre also, which* BROUGHT FISH, AND ALL MANNER OF WARE, AND SOLD ON THE SABBATH DAY *to the children of Judah and in Jerusalem.* Then I CONTENTED WITH THE NOBLES OF JUDAH, AND SAID UNTO THEM, WHAT EVIL THING IS THIS THAT YE DO, AND PROFANE THE SABBATH DAY? DID NOT YOUR FATHERS THUS, AND DID NOT OUR GOD BRING ALL THIS EVIL UPON US, AND UPON THIS OUR CITY? YET YE BRING MORE WRATH *upon Israel* BY PROFANING THE SABBATH.⁸

We have the assurance of scripture, and even if the authority of scripture were wanting, we have the history of past times to convince us, that *righteousness exalteth a nation.*⁹ Far be it from me to presume to scan the dealings of God with men, or to pronounce that nations, any more than individuals, when labouring under severe temporal calamity, are *sinner above all others, because they*

⁸ Neh. xiii. 15.

⁹ Prov. xiv. 34.

*suffer such things.*¹ But it is no unauthorized conclusion, that national prosperity or adversity is often the result of the presence or the absence of religious principle and conduct. Whether or not the distresses of which the complaints are so loud in these naturally fertile regions, be a punishment inflicted in mercy by the Almighty, to remind us forcibly and feelingly of the neglect of his ordinances, it is beyond the knowledge of man to determine; but the beneficial design of such chastisement will not be lost on us, if we are led by them seriously to consider our ways, and to make the precepts of the gospel predominate over the sinful desires of the heart.

But independently of these considerations affecting our prosperity as a people, each one among us has a personal interest in obeying God's holy law. This world, with all its pomps and vanity, must soon pass away from our eyes, and we

¹ Luke xiii. 2.

shall be summoned to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, there to give account of all that we have done in the body.

In that awful hour it will be of no avail to urge any of the plausible excuses with which here we impose upon others and even upon ourselves. Like the guest in the parable without a wedding garment, the impure, the covetous, the cruel, will then be speechless; but now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Now, then, while it is called to-day, let all of us—for who shall presume to plead innocence before the tribunal of Him who is too pure to behold iniquity—let all of us seek refuge from divine justice, where alone it can be found, and where no sincere inquirer will ever seek it in vain—at the foot of the cross. We have the Saviour's own gracious assurance, that he who cometh unto Him shall not be cast out.

Thus justified by faith in the Son of

God, and clothed in his perfect righteousness, we shall welcome him at his second coming in his glorious majesty to judge the world, for the faith that justifies, and which alone deserves the name, will purify the heart, and constrain us to devote our time, our talents, and our property to his service. But if we are contented with the bare profession of Christianity, if we lay hold of its promises while we reject its sanctifying doctrines, and neglect its precepts, the Master whom we dishonour here, will not acknowledge us hereafter. Then shall we reflect, in anguish and bitterness of soul, on the breach of even the least of God's commandments. Then shall we call to mind, with unavailing self-reproach, the services of God we have neglected—the sabbaths we have profaned, or have suffered to be profaned—the irreligion we have practised ourselves, or have encouraged in others. Then will the veil be drawn aside which conceals from our present view the wrath of an

offended Deity; and then will even the meek and merciful Jesus declare to all those who have *obeyed not the truth but have obeyed unrighteousness, I never knew you, Depart from me ye that work iniquity.*²

² Matt, vii. 23.

LECTURE IV.

CAUSES OF THE INFREQUENCY OF MARRIAGE
AMONG THE SLAVES.

(Preached at the Cathedral, Barbados, March 4, 1832.)

HEBREWS xiii. 4.

Marriage is honourable in all.

MARRIAGE is a divine institution, coëval with the creation of man and woman. *Have ye not read, says our Saviour, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh.*¹ From the beginning then—from the first introduction of man and woman, the original parents of the whole human race,

¹ Matt. xix. 4, 5.

into the world—marriage was instituted and enjoined by God himself. There can be no error here. It is not an human institution, and therefore subject to the uncertainties and imperfections which accompany every thing that originates from man. God Almighty, of wisdom infinite—whose prospective vigilance nothing can escape—saw that it was good, and gave it his absolute and unqualified sanction.

It is doubtless, in consequence of this original ordinance of the Almighty, transmitted by tradition through succeeding generations, and retaining a portion of its influence even where all traces of the command have been lost, that marriage, under certain characteristic forms, has been recognized in almost every nation of the earth.² Often, indeed, has the

² The bond of wedlock hath been always more or less esteemed of, as a thing religious and sacred. The title which the very heathens themselves do thereunto oftentimes give, is *Holy*. Hooker, Book 5.

spirit of the institution been disregarded, and an unauthorized laxity of practice introduced in the dissolution of the engagement, for inadequate reasons, or for nullifying it, by granting to the husband a plurality of subordinate wives or concubines. But with very rare exceptions, and these arising only from circumstances connected with the lowest stage of human degradation, marriage has prevailed among all nations.

I speak, of course, of the *general* usages of mankind. And it is painful to declare that the slave population in these colonies are to be classed among the exceptions. I should, perhaps, not exceed the truth, if I were to say that they are especially and singularly marked by the absence of those public ceremonies—those outward and ostensible bonds which legalize the marriage state. Among those, the union of the parties is secured by no bond more durable than that which caprice dictates. Mutual inclination, however

temporary and unstable, brings them together, and with a change of feelings the union is dissolved ; and their offspring, untaught by example, and wanting the moral influence and authority of the parents, readily acquire the same habits of unrestrained indulgence.

But how, it may be asked, can an intercourse, unhallowed by any religious rite, unsanctioned by any civil form, irregular in its origin, and debasing in its effects, prevail in countries which bear the name of Christian, and where the ministers of the gospel have authority to teach the commandments of God ?

It becomes my duty to answer this question, and I entreat your indulgence while I publicly state the causes (and I have not lightly or carelessly investigated the subject) which appear to me to have operated most influentially in diminishing marriages among your slaves, and in encouraging among them polygamy, or mutual separation at pleasure. On such

an occasion I must speak plainly and unhesitatingly, for the evil notoriously exists, and the minister of the gospel is bound to endeavour, by every legitimate means, to lessen, and, if possible, to remove it.

I take notice of the practice as *general*, not as *universal*; for within the last few years a partial change has been experienced in this, and in some of the sister colonies. Though the slave marriages have been lamentably few, compared with the amount of our negro population, still we may rejoice that the first impulse has been given to the extrication of this portion of our inhabitants from their unchristian and debasing habits. It is more, however, in the towns, and among the domestic slaves, than on estates in the country,² that the diminution of the evil is beginning to be apparent.

² The Codrington estate in this island is an exception. I believe about twenty-five marriages have been solemnized there.

1. The cause which I would first assign for the almost universal practice of concubinage on plantations, is the indifference, and in some cases even the opposition of the master to the marriage of his slaves. There prevails a vague and indefinite fear that the introduction of the marriage rite will materially alter their condition, and lead to privileges incompatible with servitude. We are often told even by proprietors, who are uninfluenced by the prejudices of earlier times, and who study in many important details the welfare of their dependents, that they are not opposed to intermarriages on the same property, but that marriages between slaves of different plantations are open to abuse, and therefore ought to be discountenanced.

The apprehension is obviously groundless, for the present system of irregular concubinage affords the same facility of ingress on an estate which would accompany a legitimate marriage. It is noto-

rious that attachments are frequently formed between slaves of neighbouring or even distant plantations; and the evil assuredly would not be increased if these attachments were sanctioned by the legitimacy and permanency of the marriage rite.

But can any apprehension on the part of the master justify the authorized violation of God's commands? Whenever we disobey the known will of the Almighty, either directly or indirectly, either by doing ourselves what is wrong, or by encouraging others to do it, we have just cause of alarm, and we may with reason dread some evil consequences to ourselves.

Under the head of opposition I may notice the ridicule with which the marriages of slaves are often treated by those who exercise authority, either direct or subordinate over them. The sneers and derision which in many instances accompany the extension of this sacred rite to

a negro slave, as if it were no more intended for him than for the beasts of the field, are surely without excuse or palliation. The white overseer or bookkeeper, who thus gratuitously insults the rational beings placed under his control, will be the first to condemn himself when his heart is open to religious impressions, and when he seriously reflects that the objects of his contemptuous ridicule are equally heirs of immortality with himself.

2. I am bound to declare (for it is imperative on me to speak without reserve or partiality) that slave marriages are retarded by the bad example which prevails in our colonies—by the licentious and unhallowed connexions which are openly formed between the superior and his dependent—between the white man and his black or coloured concubine.⁴ In the name of our common Redeemer, and on the authority of his holy precepts, I call

⁴ Appendix K.

on you, my brethren, no longer to encourage so daring an offence against the laws of God. On your own account, (if there be any present to whom my words are applicable,)—on your own account—for bear in mind the declaration of Scripture,—that no fornicator shall inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God.⁵ I entreat you renounce the unholy and debasing state of concubinage for marriage, which the same inspired authority pronounces to be honourable in all; and I charge you to remember, that by your present deeds of impurity, you are leading others, the ready followers of your example, into sin, and are preparing for yourselves the woe which is awfully denounced against those who put a stumbling-block in another's way, and cause him to offend.

Am I addressing a Christian congregation, and must I meet the argument that in the offence so strongly and repeatedly

⁵ Eph. v. 5.

prohibited in the scriptures, our innate propensities give a latitude which renders void and of none effect the law of God? Shall the licentiousness so prevalent in the land be justified on the plea that the natural appetites of men prompt them to the sin; and that as God implanted in us these appetites, he will not be extreme to condemn their indulgence? The profligate maintainers of this doctrine forget that the same plea may be urged in defence of almost every crime committed by man upon earth. For whence arises sin of every degree and complexion, unless from the unrestrained indulgence of our natural passions? Murder, theft, adultery—every outrage committed against man, and every impiety conceived and practised against God, may be traced to the corruption of the natural heart. It is blasphemy to insinuate that God encourages these sinful propensities. Every precept from the Almighty imposes a direct and absolute restraint on them; and when men rush

"into wretchlessness of most unclean living," it cannot be denied, that the will of God is resisted, and his holy commands perversely disregarded.

3. It will perhaps be urged that if even the master is anxious to put an end to the prevailing sin of concubinage among his bondsmen, and by his own example discountenances their licentiousness, his efforts will be frustrated by the opposition of the drivers and other influential negroes on the estate. It may be maintained that the persons entrusted with a petty and subordinate authority, are accustomed to regard a plurality of concubines, and a transfer of affection from one female to another, as among the chief perquisites of office, and that they will sturdily oppose any measure calculated to restrain their present indulgences.

I will admit that without the salutary controul of a superior, they have the power, by frequent and vexatious annoyances, of rendering the marriage-state a

source of suffering to both the man and his wife. But in their condition of dependance on a higher authority, this evil can only exist where the master or his deputy is passive, or where the supposed usefulness of the driver, estimated merely by his zeal in enforcing discipline among the slaves, is allowed to supersede every consideration of his moral worth.

It is imperative on masters who are influenced by a regard to their Christian duties, and I may likewise add, to their secular interests, to ascertain well the moral character of the persons entrusted by them with a delegated authority. The evils resulting from the present demoralized condition of slaves in the West Indies, extend far beyond the slaves themselves. A disease is tolerated, which though commonly supposed to be confined to the extremities of the body politic, is, however, like many diseases of the natural body, easily communicated to the nobler parts, until a moral foulness is spread

throughout the entire system. The property of the master suffers from it; the character of the master suffers; and, above all, the favour of the Most High, who willeth that righteousness should exalt the individual as well as a whole nation, is often sensibly withdrawn in the present life, and in the life to come it assuredly is not to be expected.

4. Another cause commonly assigned for the infrequency of marriage among slaves, is the supposed unwillingness on their part to enter into a contract, which, being indissoluble, compels the cohabitation of the parties throughout life, in spite of any future quarrels or misunderstandings. I know not why this should be a subject of apprehension among the slaves, more than among our white and free coloured inhabitants, and were I to draw my conclusions from the answers which I have obtained from the slaves themselves, I might say that it had scarcely any influ-

ence in obstructing the due solemnization of marriage among them. If such an objection really prevails, I conceive that it would require no great effort, and no undue exercise of authority to remove it. It is always in the master's power to impose on his dependents such restrictions as would give to their union the binding validity of a duly performed marriage. The latitude at present allowed of a plurality of wives, or of a capricious change in their affections from one individual to another, might certainly be checked, and the connexion between the parties might substantially, though not according to the recognized and legitimate forms, be made permanent. The transition from this state of mutual restraint to a compliance with the marriage ceremony as a religious rite, would be attended with no opposition or difficulty.

5. To what extent the slaves of our own day are influenced by the usages which their forefathers imported origi-

nally from Africa, it is difficult to determine. That customs are transmitted in all communities, without much variation, from father to son, we all know: and it often requires length of time, and the introduction of a new moral principle entirely to remove them. The laws of Africa, like those of most nations in the East, sanction a plurality of wives. The practice of the present generation of Creole negroes is in full accordance with such laws. But in many respects they appear even to have degenerated from the usages of their ancestors, or to have disregarded the obligations, ^o feeble as they are, which enforce permanency in the African marriage.

Africa, moreover, is a barbarous and a heathen country, and therefore barbarous and heathen customs necessarily prevail among the people. The slaves in our West India colonies inhabit a civilized and a Christian land, and they

* Appendix L.

consequently ought to partake of the blessings which accompany Christianity and civilization.

6. I hesitate not to say that the present impure and licentious practices of our slave population are intimately blended with the ignorance in which they are permitted to live, and with the darkness of heathenism which still surrounds them. They know not the doctrines of the gospel, nor have they been taught the duties which are obligatory on every follower of Christ. The advantages of religious instruction must be afforded them, not in show and semblance only, but efficiently and influentially, before we can expect the desired improvement in their moral character and habits.

7. The want of legal encouragement to the marriage of slaves is an evil which every one who is anxious for their moral improvement must deplore. I attribute to this defect in our laws many of the hindrances which obstruct the discon-

tinuance of their present licentiousness, and withhold them from the salutary restraints of the marriage bond. There is no legal distinction between the children of parents lawfully married, and those who are the offspring of an unhallowed and transient connexion. The parents themselves are in no way distinguished by superior respectability in the eyes of the public. They have none of the encouragements which exist among almost every other people, to induce a preference in favour of the marriage state. They are left without any security against a forcible separation by sale, or by the removal of the owners to a distant residence, or into another colony. Whether the men have one or more wives—for strange as it may appear, the term wife is in general use among them, whether they are constant in their attachments, or change with the caprice of the moment—whether they desert, or deny, or foster their offspring, is a matter of entire in-

difference as far as the laws of the land, or the influence of public opinion, affect them. Their habits in every thing bearing on the moral decencies of life are as little noticed as those of beings irrational and without responsibility.

“Marriage” (we learn from a high legal authority⁷) “is a contract of natural law; in civil society it becomes a civil contract, regulated and prescribed by law, and endowed with civil consequences.” I believe I may say that, with very few exceptions, and these often of a restrictive⁸ character, marriage is not *regulated and prescribed by law* in the case of the slave inhabitants of our West India colonies; nor am I aware that it is in any instance *endowed with civil con-*

⁷ Lord Stowell. Consistory Reports. *Dalrymple v. Dalrymple*.

⁸ By the law in Barbados, slave marriages are restricted to persons “being the property of the same owner.” In Antigua those who are of free condition are not allowed to intermarry with slaves.

sequences. Being defective in what is justly considered essential to it as a civil contract, we cannot wonder that the slaves themselves regard it with indifference, and even prefer the degrading licentiousness in which they are allowed to revel at present, to a restraint which is attended with no obvious and practical good to themselves or to their children.

8. I am obliged to add another cause of the infrequency of marriages among our slaves, which comes more immediately home to ourselves of the ministry, and which involves a serious, though I would hope not a wilful dereliction of duty on the part of the clergy in the West Indies. I allude to their not having pressed with the required zeal and earnestness, as well from the pulpit as in their private admonitions, the duty of the master to encourage, and the still more cogent duty of the slave to desire, the legitimacy and the permanency of the marriage bond. I may perhaps be told that in many in-

stances this interference of the minister would be liable to misapprehension, and would be ungraciously received. But where a religious duty is openly and avowedly neglected, and the evils consequent on such neglect are glaring in the community, the minister of the gospel should be the first to raise a warning voice, and to declare the judgments of God against unholy and impure livers. He is placed as a watchman to announce to the objects of his spiritual care the evils impending on the wilful transgressor of the divine law: and woe be to him, if from the fear of offending man, or from any motive of secular interest, he is unfaithful in his charge. *When I say unto the wicked, (saith the Lord,) O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.*⁹

⁹ Ezek. xxxiii. 8.

I have now mentioned some of the more ordinary, and I believe the more influential causes which have proved, and which still continue to prove an hindrance to the marriage of slaves in the West Indies. They are all such as may easily be removed without any harsh interposition of the master's authority, or any curtailment of the master's equitable rights. I have spoken freely, and I would hope intelligibly, on this important subject; for my design has been to lay open the enormity of the evil, and to enforce the conviction that it is clearly an abomination in a Christian land.

On the authority of God's holy word then, I earnestly implore every owner of slave property in the West Indies to exert his influence in checking, and if possible altogether suppressing the shameful concubinage which prevails on his plantation. I implore him to bear in mind that marriage is the ordinance of God, and that the Almighty himself limits it to two per-

sons; *they twain shall be one flesh,*¹ and *the man shall cleave,* not unto his wives, but *unto his wife.*² What God has thus joined together, let not man put asunder. What our common Creator has thus established as a law for the human race, let not man presume to alter.³

I am satisfied that suitable encouragement on the part of the master, supported by the example of his subordinate agents on the plantation, would soon turn the negro mind to a serious consideration of the duty of legitimate wedlock. But advice and individual encouragement will, I am afraid, lead to no permanent change in the existing habits of the slaves, unless they are in earnest taught the duties of our religion, and unless their marriage is endowed with those *civil consequences* which have ever been held necessary to give it validity as a civil contract.

And can we doubt that good will arise

¹ Matt. xix. 5.

² Gen. ii. 24.

³ Appendix M.

from marriage becoming general among our slave population? Surely there is good in a permanency of attachment, and in an identity of interests between the man and the woman. There is good also in the mutual confidence of the parties, and in their united endeavours to foster and protect their offspring, and to bring them up by example as well as by precept, *in the nuxture and admonition of the Lord.*⁴ There is good in imposing a check on the vagrancy of sensual indulgence, and in encouraging a wholesome increase of the population which is at present stunted and retarded by the immoralities of our people.

But let me not, in pressing these considerations on both master and slave, dwell only on inferior motives, or urge the secular advantages attending the marriage state, as the sole or principal inducement to its adoption. It is the will of God that a man should leave father

⁴ Eph. vi. 4.

and mother and cleave to his wife. It is the mandate of Christ that a man should not put away his wife and marry another, except it be for the previous crime of adultery; and we dare not oppose that will, and disobey that mandate without practically renouncing the religion taught us in the Bible. We dare not encourage or sanction illicit or unhallowed concubinage, without arrogating to ourselves the right of deliberately opposing the known commands of the Almighty.

I am aware that the slave in these colonies has hitherto laboured under peculiar difficulties in entering into the marriage state. I have already dwelt on some of the impediments which the prejudices of a former age have transmitted, with a very partial decrease, down to our own times. I may hope, however, that no master who admits the Christian obligation of *giving unto his servants that which is just and equal*,⁵ will, in the

⁵ Col. iv. 1.

present day, interpose his authority to *prevent* the marriage of his slave. Wherever toleration exists, though unaccompanied with any positive encouragement, it is the duty of the servant to avail himself of it, and to remember that *marriage is honourable in all*,⁶ in the lowest as well as in the highest of God's rational creatures upon earth ; but that fornication should not even be named, with any approval, much less be practised among them.

And as for those, whatever be their complexion or condition, who have hitherto disregarded the religious obligation of marriage, and, with the connivance of an evil world, have lived in an unblessed intercourse with their partners, avoiding every tie, whether civil or religious, which may give permanency to the connexion, let the words of the apostle sound fearfully in their ears, *whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*.⁷ Assuredly

⁶ Heb. xiii. 4.

⁷ Heb. xiii. 4.

God will judge those, who left to their own free will, and without any of the restraints arising from servitude to an earthly master, persevere in a conduct opposed to his known commands.

Far be it from me to alarm any one needlessly with the judgments of the Almighty, or to interpret the language of Scripture in a sense more terrifying than the words literally express; but I read in the book of inspiration, and you also, my brethren, may read, that *whoremongers shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.*⁸

⁸ Rev. xxi. 8.

LECTURE V.

GIVING UNTO SERVANTS THAT WHICH IS
JUST AND EQUAL.

(Preached at the Cathedral, Barbados, April 15, 1832.)

COL. iv. 1.

*Masters, give unto your servants that
which is just and equal, knowing that
ye also have a master in heaven.*

THE precepts of the religion of our divine Master are distinguished from the instruction conveyed by heathen moralists, not so much by the specific nature of the duties enjoined, as by the authority on which they rest, and the motives revealed to enforce the observance of them. The heathen¹ might argue well on the reasonableness and propriety of giving to our servants that which is just and equal;

¹ Seneca, Epist. 47. Cic. Off. l. i. c. 13.

and he might subjoin the additional, and more cogent reason, arising from the best interests of the master being involved in the merciful treatment of the slave, and from the great body of civilized society being joint sufferers with the sufferings of even its weakest members. The Christian teacher will adduce the same, or similar arguments in support of the prescribed rule of conduct for the master, but he will make them all subordinate to the command of God. From his sovereign will there can be no appeal to inferior and merely worldly motives.

It is thus the apostle Paul, when calling on Christian masters to be just to their servants, urges not merely the secular evils resulting from the neglect of this duty, *for he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he has done,*² but he bids them remember that they also have a master in heaven. As they judge, so shall they be judged;³ as

² Col. iii. 25.

³ Matt. vii. 1.

they give, so shall it be given unto them.⁴

I have lately directed your attention to certain practices morally and religiously wrong, which have been allowed to prevail in this and in other British colonies in the West Indies. With the Scriptures for my guide, and uninfluenced by measures of supposed political right and expediency, I have endeavoured to urge the discontinuance of every usage which is opposed to the known will of God. Whether the offence be sabbath-breaking, or impure and forbidden concubinage, or withholding the bread of life from the people, and confining them to spiritual darkness and the shadow of death, I have attempted to show that such practices are a direct violation of God's commands, and that they must be accompanied with his displeasure.

Resting still on the authority of the Scriptures, I propose in the present lecture

⁴ Luke vi. 38.

to lay before you certain benefits which a due regard to the precepts of the gospel will induce every master to confer on his dependents, and which are not only compatible with his secular interests, but have an evident tendency to promote them.

Let no one suppose that I mean to advance from the pulpit opinions of a political character. With the civil institutions of society in these islands I can have no concern, and it would argue a culpable departure from my own duty, were I to dwell more especially in this place on subjects unconnected with any Christian obligation, and bearing solely on the civil and political weal of my fellow men.

But when prominent duties of social life are either distinctly laid down in the Holy Scriptures, or by a just and obvious inference are deducible from them, it would be an unworthy compromise in me were I studiously to pass them by in the present lectures; and

I should be wanting in Christian charity were I to anticipate opposition to any conclusions drawn from the word of God. Yet if opposition should arise, through a misconception of the subject, or a mistaken view of my motives, I shall deem it preferable to the sickening stillness of indifference. Some advance can always be made on our seas against an opposing wind, but in a calm we are motionless.

I have already explained at some length, and in a separate discourse, the duty of affording religious instruction to our slave inhabitants. "The laudable and pious zeal of propagating the Christian religion"⁵ was one of the reasons assigned for granting originally the right of proprietorship in these colonies, and no one can deny that the obligation continues to be morally binding on all holders of property in these dependencies on the mother country.

⁵ See the preamble of the charter granted to the Earl of Carlisle in 1627.

I have also incidentally noticed certain benefits arising in the first instance to the dependent, but ultimately and more indirectly to the master, from the intercourse which ought to prevail, without any restriction or impediment, between the minister and the slave population of his parish. On this subject I must be allowed to explain my views more fully and distinctly than I have yet done.

It is well known that masters are commonly unwilling to sanction even the semblance of interference on their estates, and that they consider the discipline of their people hazarded by any intermediate authority, however slight or indirect, which turns their attention from absolute coercive power, to the influence of advice or moral control. I cannot, however, believe, that any consequences, tending to lessen the duty of obedience in the slave, would arise from the occasional visits of the clergyman on the plantation. I would fearlessly maintain, that if the master

wishes his dependents to be sober, honest, and industrious, (and what master has not this wish?) he cannot employ a more successful instrument in producing these qualities, and in rivetting them permanently in the slave, than the minister who on the authority of God's word is bound to enforce sobriety, honesty, and industry in all men; and who, with the Bible in his hands, must press on the slave the especial duty of his condition, which is to be *subject to his master with all fear, not only to him who is good and gentle, but also to the froward.*^o

I think it must be allowed that if the clergyman is obliged to obtain in every instance a formal permission to enter on the estate, it will often operate as an indirect prohibition; and if the unfettered discharge of his parochial duties is viewed with distrust, may we not ascribe it to the apprehension of publicity, where, if all were right, publicity would be courted?

^o 1 Peter xi. 18.

Think not that I am fancifully pressing a duty which is of trifling importance, and which may be observed or neglected at the will of the minister, or at the caprice of those through whose permission his ministerial exertions are rendered available. *The poor*, we are told, *have the gospel preached to them,*⁷ and those who are most poor in their worldly means, and most degraded in their condition, are peculiarly the objects of his pastoral care: and when under the control of a superior, to that superior they are entitled to look for the means of religious instruction, as one of those things which are *just and equal*, and therefore, according to the apostolic precept, due from the master to his servants.⁸

⁷ Matt. xi. 5.

⁸ "Should the objection (to the clergyman's visit to the plantations) be grounded on some undefined apprehension of improper communication between the minister and his people inimical to the interests of the master, all that can be said under such a supposition is, if the responsible minister of the parish

It may be inferred from what I have said on the subject in a former discourse, that the master's known approval will always be an incitement to the adult to attend the house of God on the sabbath ; and that in the case of children on a plantation, the same coercive power may justly, and without any imputation of harshness, be exercised, which the proprietor would not hesitate, for the enforcement of this duty, to exert over

be unworthy of the planter's confidence, whom will he trust? What other end can the minister have but the good of his people? What else can he inculcate but the doctrines and precepts of that gospel which, by the mouth of its divine Author, enjoins its followers to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's? In pressing this intercourse between the minister and his parishioners, I am not asking for more than in some colonies is already granted ; and what is conceded readily in one colony, may surely, in the present state of the West Indies, be with equal safety allowed to all."—Extract from a printed Letter of the Bishop of Barbados to his Clergy, 1829.

the younger members of his own family.

I must not refrain from expressing my satisfaction that the prejudices which had drawn, with no very tolerant, and certainly with no christian spirit, the line of demarcation in our churches, have partially subsided among us. They are singularly unbecoming in the presence of him with whom *there is no respect of persons*.⁹ I urge not the surrender of any legitimate and established rights; but I maintain it to be an unquestionable duty to give up to others in the house of God that which is unappropriated, and unused by ourselves. The eye of the preacher rests on the wide and unoccupied aisle; and a feeling of regret is raised, that where the wants are so pressing, and the means of supplying them so easy, more is not done to render the house of public worship open to all classes of our inhabitants, and attractive to them

⁹ Col. iii. 25.

from its appropriate and required accommodation.

I pass on to another subject, on which the Bible may teach us a very important duty in our conduct towards those who are dependent on us for protection, and for the maintenance of their legitimate and natural rights in society. I allude to the condition of our female slaves. *Suffer*, my brethren, I beseech you, *the word of exhortation*¹ on a subject seldom introduced to your notice in this place, but not on that account deserving either your censure or your indifference ; and if you deem it folly in me thus to innovate on the character of our pulpit addresses, I would say in the words of St. Paul, *would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly, and indeed bear with me.*²

I mean not to insist on the common and irritating subjects of discussion, in relation to this part of our population ; but

¹ Heb. xiii. 22.

² 2 Cor. xi. 1.

on religious grounds, and with an especial regard to the moral welfare of the community, I would suggest, that if female slaves were more encouraged in their domestic relations and privileges, and a more discriminating regard were paid to their sex, they would learn (to use a scriptural expression) *to guide their houses*,³ and to extend their maternal cares not merely to the bodily wants, but to the formation of the moral and religious character of their children.

It is an apostolic direction that *young women should be sober, love their husbands, love their children*, — that they should be *discreet, chaste, and keepers at home* :⁴ and shall it be said that this discretion is inapplicable to the females of our labouring population, and that in their present servile condition they are necessarily debarred from performing those duties, and exercising those privileges, which, if the authority of scripture were

³ 1 Tim. v. 14.

⁴ Titus xi. 4, 6.

wanting, even nature would point out as belonging to the mother of a family? Urge not this defence, for it would argue greater evils in a state of servitude, than I am willing to allow, to assume that it is incompatible with those kindlier feelings—those softer and more feminine duties, which in every other state distinguish the female sex, and draw an evident line between the man and the woman. The neglect of these natural discriminations, which, when duly observed, give to all their respective and appropriate employments, is clearly subversive of the moral decencies of life, and is often a check to the regular increase of our population.

I may take the present occasion to observe, that a practice has prevailed, (though I would hope that in this colony it is now comparatively rare,) which is immediately destructive of the domestic ties and relations to which I have referred, as involving some of the best interests of the community. I allude to the

compulsory disunion of families by either public or private sale—to the withdrawing of parents by violence from the natural care of their children, and to the coerced and unauthorized separation, (I use the word unauthorized with reference to the laws of God, and not to the laws of man,) of the husband from his acknowledged and attached wife. I am unwilling to dwell on a subject, on which I may hope there can be no difference of opinion among us. The laws of the colony may tolerate the abuse, and under the shelter of these laws much wrong may occasionally be committed; but the voice of a Christian community must always be raised loudly and solemnly against so clear a violation of the laws of nature.

In the book of Leviticus⁵ we read of the person who sells himself into bondage, that after he is sold, HE MAY BE REDEEMED AGAIN. ANY THAT IS NIGH OF KIN TO HIM OF HIS FAMILY MAY REDEEM

⁵ Lev. xxv. 48, 49.

HIM, OR IF HE BE ABLE, HE MAY REDEEM HIMSELF.⁶ I am too well aware of the peculiarities of the Jewish law, imposed for special purposes by the Almighty, to regard any of the civil institutions arising out of it as binding on a Christian community. But where the harshness of servitude is qualified by an enactment in favour of future freedom, it surely deserves our attention, and it is not too much to add, that it deserves also our imitation.

It was no part of the religion of Christ to interfere with the existing institutions of society. The gospel was intended for all, whether *Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free*; nor did it alter the condition, or affect the civil privileges or disabilities of any who accepted it. *Art thou called, (says St. Paul,) being a servant, (that is, a slave,) care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it*

⁶ Appendix O. , Col. iii. 11.

*rather, for he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freedman, likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant :*⁸ words which imply that those who obey from the heart that form of doctrine which is delivered to them,⁹ experience in consequence no alteration in their worldly condition, whether that condition be liberty or bondage ; but are spiritually changed, for they are *made free from sin, and they become the servants of righteousness.*¹

Still it is evident that the apostle, when viewing the temporal condition of his converts, preferred freedom to slavery whenever it could lawfully be obtained. *If thou mayest be made free, USE IT RATHER.* Connecting this passage with the one which I have already quoted, where freedom is unreservedly granted to the Jewish slave whenever he could purchase himself; and subjoining the great Christian obligation, which requires us to

⁸ 1 Cor. vii. 21, 22. ⁹ Rom. vi. 17. ¹ Rom. vi. 18.

do to another that which we would that men should do, under similar circumstances, to ourselves; the inference may fairly be deduced, that the possessor of slaves is bound on Christian principles, (for be it remembered, I confine myself to the Scriptures,) to grant unhesitatingly freedom to his dependents, whenever they, or their friends, are able to purchase it. I may hope that few are the masters, professing the Christian faith in these lands, who would not join with me in the conclusion, that the detention of any one in slavery who is willing and able to redeem himself, however it may be sanctioned by the usage of earlier times, is religiously and morally unjust.²

There is one subject more, connected with the improved condition of our bondsmen, and involving at the same time the secular interests of the master, which ought on religious grounds to be pressed

² Appendix P.

on every owner of slaves. I refer to the imperative and Christian duty binding on us all, to be merciful, for *he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy.*³

I would not assert (for it is not my belief) that the proprietor of slaves is in disposition more inclined to severity than the holder of any other species of property, whether in this or in any other part of the world. In the management of a plantation there is ample scope for the exercise of the kindlier feelings of our nature; and these feelings are often prominently and delightfully exhibited by individuals amongst us.⁴ Still, considering

³ James ii. 13.

⁴ If the remark of Burke be just, that "the dignity of every occupation wholly depends upon the quantity and kind of virtue that may be exerted in it," I would not scruple to say that there are few situations more dignified, or which more deserve our respect and admiration, than that of a West India planter, who is a Christian in belief and in practice, and whose conduct towards those who are under his con-

the weaknesses, the errors, and the passions to which even the best of men are subject, there is always danger attending the uncontrolled exercise of power over a dependent. I know not how this danger can be more successfully avoided, especially in the absence of effective prohibitory laws, than by the constant recollection that *we also have a Master in heaven, with whom is no respect of persons,*⁵ and that he requires us to be *merciful, even as He is merciful.*⁶

When I maintain that our brethren in these lands are not necessarily more cruel in disposition than their fellow men, I must not be understood to imply that they are less so. In England acts of cruelty are often perpetrated. It is the same in other parts of the world, and there is no exemption in favour of these colonies.

trol, is regulated in every case by the desire of doing to another whatsoever he would that others should do unto him.

⁵ Col. iv. 1.

⁶ Luke vi. 36.

But in England, and generally in civilized Europe, cruelty is punished by the law. The offender is dragged forth to public notice, and to public abhorrence. We must allow that it is not always thus in our West Indian settlements. There is an unworthy timidity in the merciful in exposing and in reprobating the offences of the unmerciful. Deeds of inhumanity are allowed to pass not only unpunished, but from the veil which is studiously thrown over them, often even uncensured.⁷ The evil rests not with the individual case of oppression. The connivers at cruelty share in the guilt of it; and the guilt will inevitably draw down the displeasure of an avenging God. The immediate sufferer may be but one member of the community; but in the more remote and indirect results, all the members suffer with him.

While insisting thus strongly on the Christian duties of the master, I have not

⁷ Appendix Q.

forgotten that there are also correlative duties of the servant.

Contentment in the station in which it has pleased God to place him, is urged on the bondsman as an obligation from which no desire of a better fortune or a superior condition can release him. He is not prevented from improving his circumstances, and exchanging servitude for freedom whenever he can legally do so; but to the laws of the land he must submit; not merely as a measure of worldly policy, and to avert the evils which resistance would probably bring upon him; but *for conscience sake*, and, under the influence of the controlling principle that it is God's command. Let him listen to the following words, dictated by the Holy Spirit of God, and regulate his conduct by their obvious meaning. *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. Let as many*

*servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*⁸

These apostolic precepts (and others of the same tenor might be adduced) sufficiently point out the specific and especial duties of the bondsman in the relation which he bears to his master. And the Christian slave who knows that it is his highest interest and feels it to be his delight to *do the will of God from the heart*, will need no external compulsion to urge him to the observance of these, and similar duties belonging to his station in life.

Before I conclude, I must again declare that the preachers of the gospel are not ministerially called on either to uphold or to condemn the existing condition of slavery. The religion of Christ meddles

⁸ Col. iii. 22. 1 Tim. vi. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 18.

not with it, as a civil institution, any more than it interferes with the different forms of government, varying, in all the intermediate gradations, from absolute tyranny down to tumultuous and unbridled democracy. It applies itself to the moral character of *every* individual, in *every* country, and under *every* condition of life. Whatever of an immoral, of a debasing, or of a cruel tendency exists in slavery, it unequivocally condemns, either by directions exclusively applicable to this state of society, or by precepts which embrace all conditions of men. The rule of doing to another whatsoever we would that he should do unto us, is universal; and no persons, rich or poor, free or bond, are exempt from it. The sins of adultery, fornication, drunkenness, lying, swearing—the sin of injury, or cruelty to another—and indeed all offences which expose us to the wrath of God, are condemned in all men, and in all ranks of life. These are the instances in which

the religion of Christ is evidently calculated to improve the condition of the slave, and I must add, to improve also the condition of the master. These, moreover, are instances in which the spiritual no less than the temporal interests of both master and slave are essentially advanced and secured.

The objection may still be made that it becomes not the minister of the gospel to interfere with the rights of private property—that he is not likely to form a correct judgment of matters purely secular, and that in attempting to judge at all he leaves his prescribed line of duty, and assumes an authority which in no way belongs to him. In all ordinary cases this would be true, but it applies not to the subject under our present consideration, for the property here is MAN. I could meet, however, the arguments of even the most mercenary of our proprietors—of those among us whose thoughts are ever busied in the sordid

computation of profit and loss; and I could show that whenever the slaves under our treatment are enfeebled in constitution, dissatisfied in temper, and deficient in the natural increase of population—whenever they are debarred from the legitimate comforts and privileges of social life, and the right is denied them of obtaining freedom through their own industry, or that of their relations and friends—whenever their minds are debased by ignorance, and they are brought to a level with the beasts that perish—untaught in their religious duties, and excluded from all knowledge of the salvation offered in the gospel through Jesus Christ—then will our interests proportionably decline. Distress, and poverty, and perhaps in the end entire and absolute ruin, will be dealt out to us as a just retribution in this life; and in the life to come what answer can we make, when called on to give an account of our stewardship? *If*, says holy

*Job, I despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contend with me, what shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?**

I trust it will not appear that the duty of *giving unto servants that which is just and equal*, has been needlessly introduced in a course of lectures, the main and ostensible purport of which is a review of the progress of Christianity in these lands. The connexion between the knowledge and the practice of those precepts which affect the social relations of life, is so close, that a consideration of the one almost necessarily involves the notice of the other, and I am too well acquainted with the prevalence of sound judgment and upright intentions among the enlightened inhabitants of these co-

* Job xxxi. 13 -15.

lonies, to be under any apprehension of their disapproval of this public enforcement of duties which rest on the authority of God's holy word. I content myself therefore with the assurance that I have not urged a single obligation which can be regarded as injurious, under any possible contingency, either to the master individually, or to the public as a body.

I must meet now an objection of an opposite character, for some of my hearers will probably consider that I have brought forward expediency too prominently as an inducement to the performance of Christian duties.

But the opinion that the meliorated condition of the slave will be injurious to the temporal interests of the proprietor is still so prevalent, that I feel myself to be warranted in combating an error which has long exercised a dangerous influence in our community. God forbid that I should ever recommend expediency as the motive for the performance of a positive

duty, or that I should sanction the evasion of any of the commands of the Almighty, on the ground that injury may result to our existing interests by a strict observance of them. But when it can be proved that a scrupulous adherence to the precepts of Christ's holy religion is attended with great and undoubted benefit, even in this world, it is in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures, to recommend it as *profitable*, and as having *the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.*¹

¹ 1 Timothy iv. 8.

LECTURE VI.

SOULS NOT SALEABLE.

MARK viii. 37.

*What shall a man give in exchange for
his soul?*

THIS question implies even more forcibly than could be done by a positive affirmation, the inestimable value of the soul to its possessor, and satisfies us immediately that no accumulation of wealth, nor any other external advantage, can be placed in the balance against it. Supported by the supreme authority of the Son of God, this truth commands the acquiescence of every believer, and even the proud infidel who rejects the gospel and

trusts to his own reasonings will not refuse his assent to an inference so easily deducible from the facts that are before him.

The soul is allowed by all to be immortal. Ages after ages may pass away, and the imagination may be lost in the multiplied millions of years, during which its existence will be continued, and still it will be as far removed from annihilation as at the instant of its creation. The good things of this life, as they are called, are all transitory. Under the most favourable circumstances they possess no stability or permanence. Even life itself—justly considered to be the highest earthly good, since indispensable to the enjoyment of any—is held by a precarious tenure, and there is no one among the sons of men who may not unexpectedly receive the summons, *this night thy soul shall be required of thee.*

The soul is created for eternity—and it is an eternity of happiness or of misery ;

for there is no intermediate condition like the present reserved for it—no state of existence in which its faculties will be devoid of consciousness: who then can deny, or doubt its pre-eminent value, who can imagine the equivalent which can be given in exchange for it? What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? ¹

Such are the conclusions of unassisted reason, but what philosophy can only conjecture, religion proves to be true. Are we to believe then, that this distinguishing property of man—this thinking and reasoning part of him, which we call the Soul, can be made the subject to barter

¹ Know'st thou the importance of a soul immortal?

Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!

Amazing pomp! redouble this amaze!

Ten thousand add; and twice ten thousand more;

Then weigh the whole: one soul outweighs them
all;

And calls th' astonishing magnificence

Of unintelligent creation poor.

YOUNG---*Night 7.*

and traffic, and can be surrendered to another for any supposable price? The suggestions of reason, no less than the language of inspiration, forbid us thus to degrade that part of our nature which is a pledge to us of immortality—thus to vilify the souls of our fellow-creatures, which no less than our own have been bought with the precious blood of Christ, and which therefore are not now so much our own as his. I speak not with any design to impugn, or circumscribe human laws. That these laws tolerate, and even encourage, the bodily subjection of man to man, I readily admit; nor does it fall within my province, to question their expediency. I would merely maintain that the enactments which have been framed by human authority, with a view to secure the proprietary right of a master to the services of his slave, could never have contemplated the surrender of the soul of man into the hands of his fellow man. They may have given absolute

and uncontrolled power over the body—even to the deprivation of life—but they can never sanction the right to seize on the soul for a possession, and to barter the eternal interests of the bondsmen for money.

I hope not to be misunderstood. I am not making it a political, but a religious question. I speak of what ought to be morally and religiously binding on every purchaser and holder of slaves in the West Indies. I declare it *as my opinion*, that all laws framed by a Christian legislature, and designed for a Christian community, necessarily imply a freedom in the slave to save his soul alive. I am *quite certain* that it is the duty of the master never to construe the enactments, which uphold domestic or predial servitude, into a right to debar his dependents from the exercise of their Christian obligations, and to shut them out from the eternal blessings vouchsafed to those who know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.²

² St. John.

It will be the object of the present lecture to state some of the more prominent instances in which every Christian proprietor ought to recognize the freedom of the souls of his slaves, in contradistinction to the controul which the law has given him over their bodily services. I am aware of the difficulty of drawing with precision the line which bounds the authority of the master, and I will admit that many doubts may arise, which can be removed only by a knowledge of each case separately, and not by any previously established rules or directions. On these disputable points I am anxious to say but little. The Christian master, who is accustomed to seek by prayer the teaching of the Holy Spirit, may safely judge for himself whenever they occur, and with the Bible for his guide, he will not fail to judge rightly. My purpose is to lay before you those duties which are obvious and unquestionable. If my suggestions appear to be at variance with any of the established usages of society in these

islands, I can only plead in my excuse that no custom will sanction the violation of a Christian duty. The long continuance of an evil can never be regarded as a legitimate barrier against the attempt to remove it. I appeal throughout to the Scriptures for my authority, with the fullest assurance, that in a Christian community no ulterior appeal will be required.

That the negro slave has a soul, and that for the good or evil in which that soul has been employed here upon earth, he is accountable equally with the free European, no one of the present day will have the hardihood to deny. Need we ask wherein the salvation of his soul consists, and what are the grounds on which he is encouraged to rest his hopes of life and immortality? The Scriptures furnish us with an answer in requiring from him, as well as from every other human being, *repentance*, and *faith*, and the necessary fruit of genuine faith—*obedience*.

A few observations under these three

several heads will make clear the meaning of my assertion that the soul of the slave should be left in a state of freedom, and should be subject to no impediments arising out of the temporal condition of servitude, which may endanger its everlasting salvation.

1. The slave must repent—for *God commandeth all men every where to repent*,³ because he will judge the world in righteousness, a reason which applies alike to all, without distinction of race or other external circumstances. Yet are not the instances painfully numerous in which this command has never reached the ears of the slaves on our West India plantations? or if the word repentance has by some accident become familiar to them, is it associated in their minds with any of the awful denunciations of God against impenitent sinners? They live in the habitual indulgence of the worst propensities of their nature, and yield themselves

³ Acts xvii. 30.

up to the full influence of the corruption of the human heart, yet they are ignorant that *sin dwelleth in them*,⁴ and that God requireth them to *cast away from them all their transgressions, and to make them a new heart, and a new spirit*.⁵

Notwithstanding they dwell in a Christian land. The teachers of our holy religion are among them, and around them; and unless scandalously false to their trust, are willing to instruct them in the holy precepts of the gospel. On each returning sabbath the churches and chapels are thrown open, and the glad tidings of salvation preached to all who assemble therein. With these spiritual advantages so near to them, and apparently brought home to their doors, if they knew not that God *hateth all the workers of iniquity*,⁶ and that *the soul that sinneth, it shall die*;⁷ if they know not the guilt and the destructive nature of sin, there

⁴ Romans vii. 20.

⁵ Ezek. xvii. 32.

⁶ Psalm v. 5.

⁷ Ezek. xviii. 20.

must be a thralldom of the soul. They are clearly under a spiritual bondage; either self-imposed, or the result of their external circumstances.

Are we to imagine then that they are more desperately wicked than other men, and that they obstinately close their eyes to the truth? Are we to imagine that with the usual opportunities of gaining Christian knowledge in a Christian country, they wilfully and perversely prefer ignorance? Or must we allow, that the master has indirectly debarred them from the means of becoming *wise unto salvation*,⁸ and has regarded their servile condition as incompatible with *the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free*?⁹ That such were the opinions, as well as the practice, of the early proprietors in these islands, I have already proved: and I should rejoice to have the assurance that these opinions had entirely ceased to exert any influence. I wish

⁸ 2 Tim. iii. 15.

⁹ Gal. v. 1.

not to incur the charge of asperity by alluding with needless frequency to instances of past or present neglect, but I must be permitted to say, and it is with sorrow that I say it, there are still proprietors who have not encouraged or authorized the baptism¹ of a single negro; and that there are still plantations, where, though the administration of baptism has been allowed, the salutary consequences of that divine ordinance have, through neglect or opposition, been frustrated. The slaves, although nominally Christian, receive not in their early years, nor indeed at any period of their lives, the instruction by which they may know the obligations of their Christian calling. They consequently take not on themselves their vows of baptism in more advanced life. They

¹ There is a law of the island for the encouragement of Baptisms, &c. but it is quite feeble and inoperative, as indeed all laws must be, which merely recommend a duty, and affix no pains or penalties to the wilful neglect of it.

frequent not the table of the Lord ; nor do they even join in any of the services of public worship. Deriving, as it would seem, no benefit from the appointed means of grace, and sitting in complete spiritual darkness, how *can* they repent ? I willingly admit that many are the exceptions to the statement here given, and the master whose practice is opposed to the evils which I have noticed, will feel that my remarks are entirely inapplicable to him.

2. The slave must BELIEVE. *Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved,*² is a command which enforces on all men the pre-eminent duty of faith. Yet faith is not of spontaneous growth in the heart. In all ordinary cases it is the result of previous instruction, which, through the gracious aid and influence of the Holy Spirit, is blessed to the person receiving it. *Whosoever, says the apostle, shall call upon the name of the*

² Acts xvi. 31.

*Lord, shall be saved ; but he immediately adds, how then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?** If our slaves call not on the Saviour of mankind, and if they believe not in him, is it unreasonable to conclude, with our knowledge of the peculiarities of their condition, that it is because they have not heard of him, and have had no preacher or instructor to make known unto them the salvation offered in the name of Jesus? Even when the master consents to their being taught those things which “a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul’s health,” how are they to obtain the instruction unless through the active assistance and co-operation of those in authority over them? The master’s bare acquiescence, unaccompanied by any personal exertion, or any change in the ex-

* Rom. x. 13, 14.

isting system of constraint, can avail but little. It is almost a mockery in us to say, we object not to our slaves being taught the faith of a Christian, when we add, but we cannot spare them time for the purpose. We object not to the clergyman, or his subordinate teacher, visiting them; but it must not be at unseasonable hours; and at hours which are seasonable, he must be prepared to find them engaged in the daily work of the plantation. We object not to their employing well the sabbath; but we can incur no expense in building or enlarging churches for them; nor will we use our authority or influence to prevent them from desecrating the Lord's day by their marketings or their dances. It is clear that where the slaves are unable of themselves to contribute either time or money towards their spiritual improvement, the mere negative permission of the master, unsupported by more substantial and effective encouragement, is nugatory: nor

can we get rid of the obvious consequence, that the soul of the slave partakes of the bondage to which his body is subject.

But it may be said that faith comes by reading, as well as by hearing. I admit that it does so; and for this reason I have often pressed on the master with an importunate and painful earnestness the duty of allowing his slaves to be taught to read. In looking forward to the future, I rejoice in the promise that this permission will no longer be confined within the narrow limits by which it has hitherto been bounded. A more benevolent and enlightened spirit is apparent among us, and it is already working a beneficial change on both master and servant. Still I must not conceal the fact, that many are the instances where even now a suspicious apprehension of some contingent or fancied evil induces the proprietor to interpose his authority in prohibiting the knowledge of letters to his

dependents. And is not such a prohibition a direct attempt to enslave the soul? Is it not followed, where so many other impediments to instruction prevail, by heathenish unbelief in the slave? For how can he believe in him of whom he has not heard or read? How can the gospel be the glad tidings of salvation to those from whom it is thus practically withheld? I repeat that it is mockery to say to any of our fellow creatures, Open ye the door, and enter therein, while we pertinaciously keep from them the key by which alone the door can be opened.

The slave must OBEY. He is required equally with those who are of free condition to *bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*.⁴ He must add to this faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly love and charity.⁵ We may fear that the present condition of our dependents in the West Indies is not very favourable to

⁴ 2 Cor. x. 5.⁵ Peter i. 5. 6. 7.

the duty of Christian obedience. The same impediments which obstruct the sincere repentance, and the saving faith, of the slave, will necessarily prove an obstacle to his due observance of the commandments of God. In vain shall we look for the obedient heart, if the only efficient principle of obedience be wanting. This will account for our finding it so difficult, even when we are supported by the master's countenance and authority, to withdraw the negro from his present habits of sensual indulgence, and from the wilful violation of the sanctity of the sabbath: for why should he impose restraint on himself, or sacrifice any portion of his petty and unhallowed gains, when he knows not that he is required on the authority of the great God of the universe, his Creator and his future Judge, to keep holy to the Lord one day in seven, and to *crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts*?⁶

⁶ Gal. v. 24.

But is it true the slave is always a free agent in the services required from the creature to the Creator? Is there no constraint on the soul arising out of the mistaken views of the extent to which the recognized bondage of the body gives authority to the proprietor over his servants? When services are required which involve an unavoidable violation of the sabbath—whether it be directly for the benefit of the master,⁷ or for the more immediate and necessary support of the slave—or when encouragement is given to the sale and barter of goods, or to the public dance on the Lord's day, on the plea that no other time can be spared for these purposes, it may with truth be affirmed, that the souls of the slaves are endangered through the unwillingness of the proprietor to relax his hold upon rights which trench on their spiritual welfare. And again, when the or-

⁷ The law of this island expressly authorizes the master to employ his slaves in "the casking of sugar, until ten of the clock on Sunday morning."

dinance of marriage is discountenanced, because the owner of slaves is afraid that his worldly interests may suffer by its recognition; and all the evils of an unhallowed concubinage are sanctioned, because it is deemed to be a state more in conformity with absolute servitude than the solemn and indissoluble bond which unites those who are of free condition; I cannot but admit that the slave is directly precluded from obeying the commands of the Almighty, and that the master is exercising an undue, and I must add, if I am to regulate my expressions by the laws of God, rather than by the opinions of man, an unauthorized, a sinful, control over the souls of his dependents. These and similar hindrances incidental to the condition of slavery in these colonies, and involving almost of necessity the breach of the divine commandments, assuredly ought not to exist in a Christian land, and among Christian masters.

Under the three several heads which I

have noticed as forming the groundwork of the Christian character, I have perhaps said enough to show that the proprietor who considers himself to be the purchaser of the souls of his slaves, will exercise his authority with a far less regard to their spiritual welfare, than if he limited his purchased rights to their manual and bodily labour alone. He will grudge the time necessary for the acquirement of a knowledge of their religious duties—or he will harbour undue suspicions of the application of this knowledge—or he will regard even the very precepts of our religion as calculated to interfere with his secular interests, and to diminish the productive labour of his people. There will be always present to him, the apprehension of some loss which will appear to be inadequately repaid by the increased integrity and superior moral worth of the dependent.

Is he called on by the authorized minister of God's word to allow the young and

ignorant on his plantation to be instructed, so that the darkness of heathenism may give place to the light of the gospel, and their present indifference to spiritual things may be supplanted by an earnest desire to prepare for the coming of their Lord? Is the Bible brought forward, accompanied with the solemn charge of our Saviour, *search the Scriptures*, and does the spiritual guide of the parish urge the importance of teaching the children a knowledge of letters, that they may at their leisure read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the revealed word of God, and in seasons of sickness, or when labouring under the infirmities of old age, may have a sure solace in their affliction, and a most profitable employment to fill up the vacuity of their declining years? Hear the reply which the master who claims an absolute right to the souls of his slaves will confidently make, nor will his practice vary from it—"I can afford neither the time, nor the money,

for the instruction of my people, nor am I sensible that a knowledge of the gospel truths will add to their value. I object to their being taught to read, because they will acquire a knowledge which is calculated to raise them above their present condition, and to inspire them with hopes of advancement in society. I object to it also, because they may read books of an injurious tendency, and may learn to be dissatisfied with the evils almost inseparable from servitude."

Does the parochial minister beg to have a free and unrestricted access to the dwellings of the negroes, that he may at all seasons give them spiritual counsel, and may teach and admonish them whenever they are not employed in their master's work? The reply is evasive, or perhaps altogether prohibitory. At fixed and prescribed times he may enter on the plantation; but he is not to have a discretionary power to visit it. It is possible that he may go there as a spy, or as

a meddling suggester of grievances, or as the secret instigator of rebellion. There is no apparent good in these uncertain visits. There is much possible evil. They must not be permitted.

Would he thus think and act if he were brought to regard the dependent as master of his own soul, and as under an obligation to provide for its everlasting welfare? I look around me, and in the conduct of certain of the proprietors in this, and in the neighbouring colonies, I find a satisfactory answer. I have witnessed myself the change. I have seen the fallacious arguments which before provoked the master into opposition to the spiritual improvement of his slaves, yielding one by one to the force of gospel truth, and their place supplied by the conviction that he is bound to acquiesce in, and zealously support, every measure which has for its object the advancement of his dependents in Christian knowledge

and practice. I have heard him indignantly rebut the insinuation that evil may arise from the privilege of reading being extended to the slaves, by pointing to those passages in holy writ which enforce contentment on all men, and which direct the servant to regard obedience to his earthly master as his peculiar and especial duty. He has solicited the frequent and uncontrolled communication of the minister with his bondsmen; and has encouraged them to regard him as a friend with whom they may deposit their earthly cares and sorrows, and to whom they may look for the consolation which arises from the prospect of a blessed eternity. Whom (he has been heard to say) can I trust, if the preacher of God's word is to be suspected? Great indeed must be the errors in the management of my slaves, if I dread to submit them to his inspection.

Impressed with these opinions, and

influenced by Christian motives, he has laboured to have brought home to the understandings and the hearts of his dependents the vital truths of the corruption of human nature, and of the need which the gospel discloses of a deliverance both from the guilt and power of sin, accomplished through the Saviour's voluntary sacrifice of himself. He has gloried in being instrumental in leading them to this saving knowledge of their Redeemer, and in teaching them to pray for those blessed influences of the Holy Spirit, which God in his mercy vouchsafes to them, as well as to their white and free brethren, since all require them to be rendered meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

And has he suffered in his temporal interests by thus leaving to his bondsmen the care and control of their souls, or by inciting them to a due preparation for eternity? I speak not vaguely and hesi-

tatingly ; but with a knowledge of facts as they have occurred, when I declare that in every instance where the dependent has been allowed the free exercise of his religious duties, and has been encouraged in them, the master has been blessed in his worldly gains. An especial providence seems to have watched over him, and to have singled him out as a proof that *righteous is the Lord and upright are his judgments : for the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.*⁷

I here close the subject. I have drawn largely on your patience in this and in the preceding lectures. The magnitude of the interests involved in the faithful discharge of the duties recommended to you, must be my justification. I have pleaded for the souls of my fellow men. I have pressed earnestly and solemnly on

⁷ Psalm cxix. 157. Job xxxiv. 11.

your consideration the eternal welfare of beings descended from the same original parents with yourselves — partaking of the same nature — born in the same sin — and objects of the same merciful redemption. I have placed before you, without flattery or concealment, the responsibility under which you lie in the sight of God; for you are only guardians, and not proprietors of the souls of your slaves. You hold them, as it were, in trust; and at your hands will they be demanded by the supreme Lord of all men. Think not that my zeal has been exerted exclusively in favour of the bondsmen among us. It has had equally for its object the good of their masters. My prayer is, that all slaves may be taught the glad tidings of salvation, and may know *the truth as it is in Jesus*.⁸ My prayer also is, that all masters may be able to give account *with joy and not*

⁸ Eph. iv. 21.

*with grief,*⁹ to Him who *judgeth righteously,*¹ and who is *no respecter of persons.*²

⁹ Heb. xiii. 17.

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 23.

² Acts x. 34.

APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

A.—Page 6.

“ THERE was a time which it may be fit sometimes to revive in the remembrance of our countrymen, when even human sacrifices are said to have been offered in this island. But I would particularly observe on this day, for it is a case precisely in point, that the very practice of the slave-trade once prevailed among us. Slaves were formerly an established article of our exports. Great numbers were exported like cattle from the British coasts, and were to be seen exposed for sale in the Roman market. Why might not some Roman senator, reasoning on the principle of some honourable gentlemen, and pointing to *British barbarians*, have predicted with equal boldness,

There is a people that will never rise to civilization: there is a people destined never to be free—a people without the understanding necessary for the attainment of useful arts—depressed by the hand of nature below the level of the human species, and created to form a supply of slaves to the rest of the world?”—
Pitt's Speeches.

“ The exportation of slaves from some parts of England continued to the very end of this period. ‘ Some young men,’ says William of Malmsbury, ‘ were exported from Northumberland, to be sold, according to a custom which seems to be natural to the people of that country, of selling their nearest relations for their advantage: a custom which we see them practise even in our own days.’ The people of Bristol seem to have been no less addicted to this ignominious branch of trade; of which we have the following curious account in the life of Wulfstan, who was bishop of Worcester at the Norman conquest. ‘ There is a sea-port town called Bristol, opposite to Ireland, into which its inhabitants make frequent voyages on account of trade. Wulfstan cured the people of this town of a

most odious and inveterate custom, which they derived from their ancestors, of buying men and women in all parts of England, and exporting them to Ireland for the sake of gain Wulfstan, knowing the obstinacy of these people, sometimes stayed two months amongst them, preaching every Lord's day; by which, in process of time, he made so great an impression on their minds, that they abandoned that wicked trade, and set an example to all the rest of England.'—*Henry's Great Britain*, b. ii. chap. 6. *W. Malms.* l. i. c. 3. *Anglia Sacra*, t. ii. p. 258.

As late as the twelfth century, the English were accustomed to sell their own children as slaves to the Irish, and this iniquitous traffic was suffered to continue until the clergy in Ireland, in a general synod, held at Armagh, denounced it as an enormous crime, and as one of the especial causes of the just vengeance of Heaven against their nation. The words of Giraldus strikingly exhibit to us the atrocity of the practice. “His itaque completis convocato apud Ardmachiam totius Hiberniæ clero, et super advenarum in insulam adventu tractato

diutius et deliberato; tandem communis omnium in hoc sententia resedit; propter peccata scilicet populi sui, eoque præcipue quod Anglos olim tam a mercatoribus, quam a prædonibus atque pyratis emere passim, et in servitutem redigere consueverant, divinæ censura vindictæ hoc eis incommodum accidisse, ut et ipsi quoque ab eadem gente in servitutem vice reciproca jam redigantur. Anglorum namque populus, adhuc integro eorum regno, et priusquam inopiam ullam aut inediam sustinerent, filios proprios et cognatos in Hiberniam vendere consueverant. Unde et probabiliter credi potest, sicut venditores olim, ita et emptores tam enormi delicto juga servitutis jam meruisse. Decretum est itaque prædicto concilio, et cum universitatis consensu publice statutum, ut Angli ubique per insulam, servitutis vinculo mancipati in pristinam revocentur libertatem.—*Hibern. Ex-pug. l. i. c. 18.*

B.—Page 13.

The following address, which Morgan Godwyn states to be taken from a pamphlet which was put into his hands by a Friend, or Quaker, of the island, and which he calls an invective

levelled against the ministers to whom it was, by the way of interrogatory, directed, is not undeserving our notice.

“ Who made you ministers of the gospel to the white people only, and not to the blacks also? Why do you not teach your people in this part of their duty, or at least show them the way by your example, beginning at home with your own families, whom you cannot deny but you neglect as much as you do the rest? What should be the reason that you spend so much time in railing against us, whom you call Quakers, and other peaceable people; but where there is occasion, have not a word to say? Doth not this silence proceed from a fear of men, whom you are loth to displease by this doctrine, for what ends yourselves best know? And do you not thereby testify that you are men-pleasers and hirelings, but not the servants of God, nor as you falsely pretend, ministers of Jesus Christ, who, as your catechism doth confess, came to redeem all mankind, without excepting Negroes and Indians? And therefore his ministers and apostles were by him commanded to preach the gospel to all the world, and to be witnesses of him to the uttermost parts of the earth. Is

this the way to set forward the salvation of all men; and to make the ways of God and of the gospel known unto all nations, and to all conditions of men therein, not omitting slaves, nor any other? Is this to prepare the way of Jesus Christ against his second coming to judge the world, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and to approve yourselves faithful and true pastors, earnestly feeding the flock of Christ, and preaching his word unto them, as in your collects you pretend to pray? Is this to follow the saints in all godly and virtuous living, who, as you read, (Mark xvi. and the last verse,) went forth preaching every where, and ventured their lives into all the world to preach the gospel to the heathen, when you neglect it in your parishes and families? Is this to take upon you the office of a minister, to serve God for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying of his people committed to your care and charge? Is this to be ready with all faithful diligence to use both public and private monitions and exhortations, as well to the sick as to the whole within your cures? Is this to be diligent to frame and fashion your own lives and your families according to the doctrine of Christ, and to make both yourselves

and them, as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ; laying aside all study of the world and the flesh? For shame—cease to call yourselves Christ's ministers, unless you will be contented to work in Christ's vineyard, to preach his doctrine truly, and to exhort and edifie the poor of his flock, as he commanded you, and to testifie both to small and great, bond and free, (as his apostles and ministers did,) the whole counsel of God; lest hereafter you be found partial in yourselves, against which both Paul and James do warn you," &c.—*Negro's Advocate*, p. 4.

Godwyn adds,

“ ——— Pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.”

“ Nor would I be thought to speak this at random, (their not allowing the negro children baptism, nor suffering them upon better terms than direct fornication to live with their women—for wives I may not call them, being never married—and accounting it foppish, when dead, to think of giving them Christian, or even decent

burial, that so their pretence for brutifying them might find no contradiction,) for I cannot easily forget the supercilious checks and frowns (to say no worse) which I have upon this occasion alone met with; and for such innocent arguments and persuasions, I have, in the opinion of some chill professors, (otherwise called Atheists,) perhaps less prudently, (I am sure to the ruine of my small interest,) been sometimes bold to urge to our people, in order to their conviction, as to the necessity of this duty. Particularly once, soon after my arrival into this new world, for minding a negro of his baptismal vow, formerly made in England, not doubting it to be grateful to his master, whom I took for a discreet person, which indeed he was, so far as getting of money would amount to. By others it hath been demanded of me, what I had to do with their servants, when once affirming them to be a part of a minister's care and charge. Another time it was told me, with no small passion and vehemency, and that by a religious person, (for so in all things else she appeared,) that I might as well baptize a puppy as a certain young negro, the mother whereof was a Christian, and for ought I know, (notwithstanding her complexion,) as dear to God as herself. Nor was this gentle-

woman in the least infected with Anabaptism, but a frequenter of the church, and very carefully procuring always for her own, what she thus denied to her negro children. And, in truth, the hard words and evil language I have upon this account received, would take up too much time to be rehearsed; nor is it very pleasant for me to remember, further than to blame, that first horrid principle, the natural result whereof these discourses and practices have most certainly been. ‘There being no doubt but that (to use the words of one of our Homilies in an almost parallel case) they take the multitude (of negroes I shall add) for vile souls, of whose loss and safeguard no reputation is to be had, for whom yet Christ paid as dearly as for the mightiest prince, or the wisest and best learned in the earth.”—*Ibid.* p. 37.

A contemporary French writer* fully corroborates the account which Morgan Godwyn has given of the neglected state of the slaves in Barbados about this period. “Les Anglois ménagent très-peu leurs negres Les ministres ne les instruisent, et ne les baptisent point ;

* Labat.

on les regarde à peu près comme des bêtes à qui tout est permis, pourvu qu'ils s'acquittent très exactement de leur devoir. On souffre qu'ils aient plusieurs femmes, et qu'ils les quittent quand il leur plaît; pourvu qu'ils fassent bien des enfans, qu'ils travaillent beaucoup, et qu'ils ne soient point malades, leurs maîtres sont contents, et n'en demandent pas davantage."

Labat proceeds to inform us, that insurrections were very common at this time in the English islands, notwithstanding the insurgent slaves were always punished with the utmost severity. There was no disposition to deal mercifully with them. "Ceux qui sont pris et conduits en prison sont condamnez a être passez au moulin, brulez tout vifs ou exposez dans des cages de fer qui les serrent, de manière qu'ils ne peuvent faire aucun mouvement, et en cet état on les attache à une branche d'arbre où on les laisse périr de faim et de rage. On appelle cela mettre un homme au sec." The French colonies were much less liable to these insurrectionary movements, and one reason assigned by Labat is the attention which was paid by the French proprietors of that day to the moral and religious improvement of their slaves.—*Labat, tom. 4. p. 401—3.*

We find similar remarks in vol. 5. p. 42, with a very striking attestation to the beneficial results (as far as the master is concerned) of the religious instruction of the slave. After relating that the French slaves of St. Christopher's fled to the mountains when the English seized on the island, and afterwards, as opportunities offered, voluntarily returned to their former masters, he adds ;—" Ces exemples de fidélité ne peuvent s'attribuer qu'à l'instruction dans la Foi que ces pauvres gens avoient reçûe de leurs maîtres, et à la crainte qu'ils avoient de la perdre, en vivant sous des maîtres qui se mettent si peu en peine du salut de leurs domestiques."—*Labat, tom. 5. p. 44.*

C.—Page 20.

" I promised to do my best endeavour that he might be made a Christian ; and when I came home, spoke to the master of the plantation, and told him that poor Sambo desired much to be a Christian ; but his answer was, that the people of that island were governed by the lawes of England, and that by those lawes we

could not make a Christian a slave. I told him my request was far different from that, for I desired him to make a slave a Christian. His answer was, that it was true there was a great difference in that; but being once a Christian, he could no more account him a slave, and so loose the hold they had of them as slaves by making them Christians; and by that means should open such a gap, as all the planters in the island would curse him. So I was struck dumb, and poor Sambo kept out of the church.”
—*Ligon's History of Barbados*, p. 50. A. D. 1653.

Pendant le séjour que j'ay fait autresfois dans les Isles de S. Eustace, et d'Antigoa, on me dit que les Hollandois et les Anglois tenoient pour maxime dans leur reformation prétendue, de n'avoir point d'esclaves Chrétiens : croyant faire injure au sang et à la loy de Jesus Christ de tenir en servitude ceux que sa grace affranchit de la captivité; et l'on m'assura qu'ils ne baptizoient jamais leurs negres que quand ils les voyoient à l'article de la mort; et que s'ils réchapoient de leurs maladies, ils estoient libres, et n'estoient plus obligez à servir leurs maistres

que comme les autres serviteurs qui gagnent de bons gages: ceux qui me firent ce rapport me dirent aussi que la plupart des habitans les laissoient assez souvent mourir sans baptesme, de peur de les perdre s'ils venoient à guerir."—*Du Tectre*, 1656, tom 2. p. 503.

“It is not to be expected that masters too commonly negligent of Christianity themselves, will take much pains to teach it their slaves: whom even the better part of them are in great measure habituated to consider, as they do their cattle, merely with a view to the profit arising from them. Not a few therefore have openly opposed their instruction from an imagination, now indeed proved and acknowledged to be groundless, that baptism would entitle them to freedom. Others, by obliging them to work on Sundays to provide themselves necessities, leave them neither time to learn religion, nor any prospect of being able to subsist if once the duty of resting on that day makes part of their belief; and some, it may be feared, have been averse to their becoming Christians, because, after that, no pretence will remain for

not teaching them like men.”—*Abp. Secker’s Sermon before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1740.**

D.—Page 22.

I am borne out in these remarks by the observations of a sensible and experienced planter in the West Indies.

“ Indeed, the probability of the good effects of religion hath not altogether escaped the minds of our own planters, for there have not been wanting some virtuous men among us, who at various periods have made attempts to impress their slaves with the ideas of Christianity: but those efforts were neither very general, nor long persisted in; being commenced without experience, perhaps with a zeal too languid for the end proposed, being accompanied with the ridicule of others of the society, who neither hoped nor wished their negroes to be better Christians than themselves, and not followed with the immediate effect which impa-

* See Burn’s Eccles. Law. Baptism of negroes in the plantations.

tience expected, the attempt was abandoned, under the persuasion that the negroes were beyond the possibility of a reform.”—*Practical rules, &c. by Dr. Collins of St. Vincent.*

E.—Page 22.

The opinion that the negro is not only inferior in endowments to the European, but that he belongs to a species altogether distinct, has been frequently advanced by the advocates of the African slave trade. “For my own part,” says Long, the historian of Jamaica, Book iii. “I think there are extremely potent reasons for believing that the white and the negro are two distinct species. . . . In general, the African negroes are void of genius, and seem almost incapable of making any progress in civility or science. They have no plan or system of morality among them. Their barbarity to their children debases their nature even below that of brutes. They have no moral sensations . . . They are represented by all authors as the vilest of the human kind, to which they have little more pre-

tension of resemblance than what arises from their exterior form.

These opinions seem to have arisen from viewing the negro only in a state of abject servitude, and from contemplating the almost brutal degradation consequent on such a state. Possibly it was from a similar experience of the debasement of the human character, when under the deteriorating influence of slavery, that so great a man as Aristotle* maintained the lawfulness of holding in perpetual bondage those barbarous nations who were regarded by his countrymen as an inferior race, destined by nature to labour with the body rather than with the mind. The vaunted superiority of the Greeks availed them not, during the long period of their subjection to the Turkish power. Barbarous themselves, they were the slaves of barbarians. In passing through their country previously to their late struggle for independence, I could trace in the vices of the people many of the direct and obvious effects of servitude. These vices have, with a shew of retributive justice, been since urged against them, (as during the glory of ancient Greece they were urged by their forefathers against the slaves of their

* Aris. Polit. b. 1. c. 2.

time,) to prove their incapacity for the enjoyment of the blessings of freedom. It is sufficient to read the able and philosophical work of Dr. Pritchard, entitled "Researches into the Physical History of Mankind," to perceive the fallacy of the arguments which would divide mankind, into several distinct and independent species. The Christian will be satisfied with the declarations of Scripture on this subject.

F.—*Page 41.*

Between the years 1825 (in which year the bishop first arrived in the West Indies) and 1831, seven new chapels were built in Barbados.

Eight churches, seven consecrated chapels, and one chapel on the point of being consecrated, were destroyed by the hurricane of the 11th of August 1831. Three churches and one chapel remained after the storm in a very damaged and dilapidated state.

As this hurricane was singularly destructive, and perhaps more violent, considering the time it lasted, than any experienced within the memory of man, or recorded in history, a short

description of it from an eye-witness may not be uninteresting—

—*Ipse miserrima vidi.*

It seems to have wanted many of the usual indications which precede, and mark the approach of a convulsion of this kind in the West Indies. The day of the 10th closed with merely a lowering sky and a few showers of rain. About one in the morning of the 11th the wind was observed to blow strongly from the north, and in a short time it veered towards the west with a perceptible increase of force. Between two and three, it had exceeded the violence of a common storm ; but it was not until after three that the hurricane raged in all its fury with its full powers of destruction. The uproar of the elements became now terrific. No one was secure from danger, nor could the mind be relieved from the certainty that almost every blast brought with it death to a fellow creature. Between three and five the wind shifted in eddying and furious gusts, and with a roaring which drowned every other noise, from north-west to west, and then to south. During these two hours, houses built apparently with strength sufficient to resist any external violence were tumbled to

the ground, covering the inmates under a mass of stones and rafters. In one family alone, twenty-two persons who had taken refuge in the cellar were thus crushed to death. Trees of an immense size, and of the growth of ages, were either torn suddenly up by their roots, or snapt asunder in the middle.* The lightning, instead of darting through the air, skimmed along the ground in broad flashes, and seemed to sweep every thing before it. Meteoric balls and pillars of fire were seen in many places. The clouds, whenever the lightning gave a sight of them, appeared to touch and mingle in thick masses with the ground. Even the earth itself was moved, and more than one shock of an earthquake was distinctly felt.

The noise of the storm was unearthly. No description can convey a just notion of it. Many who were driven from their houses and exposed to the full beat and rage of the elements, compared it to the mingled shrieks of an innumerable crowd of persons in the air above.

The extreme fury of the wind can be estimated only by its effects. As soon as the day

* This was a distinctive feature of the Egyptian plague of hail. "The Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground."—Exodus ix. 23.

opened, the eye could discover nothing but ruin and devastation. In the country very few trees were standing, and these were much broken, and completely stripped of their foliage. The ground was scathed and parched on every side. In one night the luxuriance of summer had given place to the dreary and leafless aspect of a northern winter. The few houses which remained were all unroofed and otherwise extensively damaged.

Between five and six in the morning, my house, the walls and floors of which had withstood the fury of the tempest, afforded a temporary shelter to the wounded and dying in the immediate vicinity. Of six persons who were brought there, one only survived the injuries occasioned by the storm. At the distance of a few hundred yards, a little village had recently been built, and the houses were tenanted chiefly by free coloured persons. On the morning of the 11th not a single house was standing. The whole was one mass of ruin and complete desolation. I passed over the ground between seven and eight, and I could scarcely discover even the site of the buildings.

I went out immediately after the abatement of the storm. The first person I met was a lad

evidently in a state of delirium. Excessive fright had given a shock to his mind, which deprived him for a time of his senses. He addressed me in incoherent and unmeaning language, and ran from me when I approached him. A few steps further brought me to a child lying dead in the road by the side of a goat which was also lifeless—both had been killed by the storm: very near them was a woman on the ground most piteously imploring help. A ragged splinter of wood had struck her below the knee, and passing through nearly the middle of the leg, it protruded about six inches on the opposite side. She died within a very few days.

In the town and its environs, the desolation was more concentrated, and therefore more striking. Walls, roofs, beams of wood, furniture, brute animals and human beings, were huddled together in an apparently inextricable mass. The wounded and the dead were prominent and most painful objects amidst the general confusion.

It is difficult to determine whether the loss of life was greater within the houses or in the open air. The extent of the evil rendered it impossible to ascertain the cause of death in

each particular instance. We merely know that many were crushed under the ruins of their own houses, and many destroyed by the falling of stones and rafters in their attempt to escape. The lightning killed some, while others were blown away by the gusts of wind, and either dashed with violence against the walls and trees, or else carried into the sea and drowned. Some idea may be formed of the danger occasioned by the scattered stones and fragments of wood, from the fact, that in one of the buildings belonging to his Majesty's government, a piece of timber was forced by the wind into the solid stone with so much violence, and to so great a depth, that it was found impossible to wrench it out with the hand.

The ships were all driven from their moorings, and hurried without the least power of resistance towards the shore. They were immediately stranded on the beach, and were raised so high that the following day a person could walk round many of them without difficulty. The violence of the wind allowed no time for their striking and gradually breaking to pieces.

On the morning of the 11th there was a kind of wild amazement among the people, like that which attends the first awakening from a

most frightful dream. It was long before they recovered their steadiness of mind, and their wonted powers of exertion. Meanwhile the wounded and mutilated were in many cases left without succour, and even without notice. I believe some were not extricated from the ruins until the third day. For several days the stench arising from the unburied dead bodies was most offensive.

No correct returns* were made of the persons killed by the hurricane. The conjectures were for the most part vague and unsatisfactory. Some estimated the loss at three thousand; others at five thousand, or even more. Some approximation may, perhaps, be made to the truth, by our knowing that in the garrison, which contained about twelve hundred soldiers, more than fifty perished in the hurricane, or

* The returns of the wounded and killed by the hurricane, although not given until after an interval of some months, were singularly and unaccountably inaccurate. It is stated of the parish of St. Michael, that there was only one free coloured person wounded. Yet it is notorious that some hundreds of this class of the inhabitants were severely injured and disabled by the storm. In the Cathedral alone there were thirty or forty, under surgical care, and on many amputations were performed.

from injuries received by it. The wounded exceeded one hundred and thirty.

Most signally did the Almighty remember mercy in the midst of his judgments. Had the wind continued with unabated violence a few hours longer, and extended over the space of time usual in visitations of this kind, few persons would have been spared to relate the tale of almost universal destruction. Even another hour would have added fearfully to the loss of lives, and have perhaps completed the ruin of buildings and other property.

A striking effect of the extreme fury of the storm appeared in the great destruction of birds. On the morning of the 11th the ground in many parts was strewed with the common field birds of the country, either dead or severely wounded. The quantity killed immediately round Coddington College was so great, that to prevent the stench arising from their decay, persons were employed to collect and bury them in trenches dug for the purpose. The horses which escaped from the ruins of the fallen stables were in many instances hurried with irresistible violence over the cliffs and other abrupt precipices, and were killed.

The natural causes of hurricanes seem to

have eluded the researches of philosophy. They are among the hidden sources of chastisement by which He who rideth upon the wings of the wind afflicts for just and salutary ends an entire people. No combination of the elements with which man is at present acquainted, is able to produce these tremendous convulsions, which seem to affect, at one and the same time, the earth, the sea, and the air.

The rapidity with which the wind passes from one point of the compass to another, is peculiarly characteristic of the hurricane. Virgil has seized on this fact in one of his allusions to a storm.

Adversi rupto ceu quondam turbine venti
Configunt.—Æn. ii. 416. *

And it is noticed with a striking accuracy in the book of Job, chap. i. ver. 19. There were many in the island of Barbados, who literally and fatally experienced the *great wind* which *smote the four corners of the house*, so that it fell upon them.

Long, the historian of Jamaica, in his enumeration of the prognostics of a hurricane, mentions the rolling of the sea on the coast, and

* See also Æn. i. 89.

into the harbours, and its emitting at the same time a strong and disagreeable odour. It has been remarked also, as another of the prognostics, that some hours before the hurricane, strange noises, resembling the distant roar of thunder, are heard to proceed from the bottom of wells and deep excavations. The falling of the barometer is considered to be the surest indication of these fearful tempests in the West Indies. It fell suddenly, and to a very low point, on the night of the 10th of August.

It is no idle curiosity which would lead us to ascertain the most probable means of personal safety in a hurricane.

The interior of a circular building, such as a windmill, affords perhaps the greatest protection. There is also little danger under a strongly built arch. If in countries subject to hurricanes, the plan were adopted of rounding the corners of the houses, and giving the buildings generally a circular, instead of an angular form, the probability of their falling would be much lessened.

It is always advisable, as soon as there are just apprehensions of a hurricane, to close by strong fastenings every door and window in the house. If from the slightness of the shut-

ters, or the want of bars of sufficient strength to secure them, this is impracticable, it is perhaps expedient, though attended with the sacrifice of furniture, to throw open every window. The wind should either be entirely excluded, or fully admitted with a free passage for its escape. Its partial admission is attended with certain ruin to the building.

Trees thickly planted towards the west, but not so near the dwelling as to injure it by their fall, break very much the first violence of a hurricane, and often prove the means of preserving a house from material injury.

The open fields, if they can be reached in time, and if they are sufficiently removed from the neighbouring buildings, afford an uncomfortable, but comparatively secure retreat. It is however, often dangerous to leave the house. I am persuaded that in the late hurricane, the real evils were diminished, though to the feelings of the sufferers the horrors were much increased, by its having happened in the night. Had there been daylight, many would have been tempted to escape from the immediate danger, and by rushing into the open air, would probably have perished amidst the uprooted and broken trees, or the fragments of wood and stone, which were

hurled with inconceivable violence in every direction.*

G.—Page 60.

A society of ladies in England, of which her grace the Duchess of Beaufort is patroness, are engaged in the praiseworthy attempt to promote the early education and improvement of the negro children in the British West Indies. Their object is one of piety and pure benevolence, and it is pleasing to learn from their reports that success has in many instances attended their exertions.

“ I am a zealous friend, upon conviction, to infant schools for the children of the poor. No person who has not himself watched them, can form an adequate notion of what these institutions, when judiciously conducted, may effect in

* The liberality shown by the sister colonies in affording the most prompt assistance, by supplies of food, and by large pecuniary contributions, “ *to their power, yea, and beyond their power,*” can never be too highly appreciated: many a life was saved, and many a bitter suffering assuaged, by this noble display of Christian charity.

forming the tempers and habits of young children; in giving them, not so much actual knowledge, as that which at their age is more important, the habit and facility of acquiring it; and in correcting those moral defects which neglect or injudicious treatment would soon confirm and render incurable. The early age at which children are taken out of our national schools, is an additional reason for commencing a regular systematic discipline of their minds and wills, as soon as they are capable of profiting by it; and that is at the very earliest opening of the understanding, and at the first manifestation of a corrupt nature in the shape of childish petulance and waywardness.”—*Bishop of London’s Charge*, p. 28. (July 1830.)

H.—Page 75.

“ Even Pagan writers have not overlooked the importance of sabbatical institutions. Plato, *Laws* II. represents the solemn festivals as a beneficent remission of labour to mankind, which he ascribes to the gods; and Strabo X. remarks, that the very rest withdraws the mind from human occupations and turns it towards

God. It would not be difficult fully to substantiate the justness of these remarks by an induction from facts, by showing that the state of morals and the aspect of society have uniformly corresponded to the degree of respect paid to the observance of the sabbath."—*Conder's Law of the Sabbath*, p. 35.

I.—Page 77.

"I will acquaint you, (says Sir Matthew Hale, in a letter to his grandchildren) with a truth that above forty years experience, and strict observation of myself, hath assuredly taught me. I have been fifty years a man as much conversant in business, and that of moment and importance, as most men ; and I will assure you, I was never under any inclination to fanaticism, enthusiasm, or superstition.

"In all this time, I have most industriously observed, in myself and in my concerns, these three things :—

"1. Whenever I have undertaken any secular business on the Lord's day, (which was not absolutely and indispensably necessary,) that business never prospered and succeeded well with

me. Nay, if I had set myself that day but to forecast or design any temporal business, to be done or performed afterwards, though such forecasts were just and honest in themselves, and had as fair a prospect as could be effected, yet I have been always disappointed in the effecting of it, or in the success of it, so that it grew almost provincial with me, when any importuned me to any secular business that day, to answer them, that if they suspected it to succeed amiss, then they might desire my undertaking of it upon that day. And this was so certain an observation of me, that I feared to think of any secular business that day, because the resolution then taken would be disappointed or unsuccessful.

“ 2. That always the more closely I applied myself to the duties of the Lord’s day, the more happy and successful were my business and employments of the week following. So that I could, from the loose or strict observance of that day, take a just prospect and true calculation of my temporal successes in the ensuing week.

“ 3. Though my hands and mind have been as full of secular business, both before and since I was a judge, as, it may be, any man’s in

England, yet I never wanted time in my six days to ripen and fit myself for the business and employments I had to do, though I borrowed not one minute from the Lord's day to prepare for it by study or otherwise. But on the other hand, if I had at any time borrowed from this day any time for my secular employments, I found it did further me less than if I had let it alone; and therefore, when some years experience, upon a most attentive and vigilant observation, had given me this instruction, I grew peremptorily resolved never in this kind to make a breach upon the Lord's day, which I have now strictly observed for above thirty years. This relation is most certainly and experimentally true, and hath been declared by me to hundreds of persons, as I now declare it to you."

L.—*Page 111.*

That there are marriages in Africa, and that the ceremony carries with it an obligatory force on one of the parties at least, the following account from the travels of Mungo Park, is a satisfactory proof.



“ We remained at Tambacunda four days, on account of a palaver which was held on the following occasion : Modi Lemina, one of the slatees belonging to the coffle, had formerly married a woman of this town, who had borne him two children: he afterwards went to Manding, and remained there eight years without sending any account of himself, during all that time, to his deserted wife, who seeing no prospect of his return, at the end of three years, had married another man, to whom she had likewise borne two children. Lemina now claimed his wife, but the second husband refused to deliver her up: insisting that by the laws of Africa, when a man has been three years absent from his wife without giving her notice of his being alive, the woman is at liberty to marry again. After all the circumstances had been fully investigated in an assembly of the chief men, it was determined that the wife should make her choice, and be at liberty either to return to the first husband, or to continue with the second, as she alone should think proper.”—*Park's Travels*, p. 351.

Every traveller in Africa speaks of adultery as a crime, punishable by the laws of the country. It is therefore evident that the laws re-

cognize, to a certain extent, the validity of the marriage contract.

M.—*Page* 118.

A defence has been set up for polygamy on the ground that in warm climates the females greatly outnumber the males ; and that hence it would appear to be the design of Providence that a man should have more than one wife. The assertion on which this argument is founded, is untrue. Wherever care has been taken to obtain an accurate census of the population, it has been found that, with a very slight variation, the births are in the proportion of fourteen males to thirteen females. We know this to be the case in England and in other countries in Europe.

“ If,” says Sir Stamford Raffles, “ we were to depend upon the statement of a writer whom Montesquieu refers to, that in Bantam, there were ten women to one man, we should be led to conclude with him that this was a case particularly favourable to polygamy, and that such an institution was here an appointment of nature, intended for the multiplication of the

species rather than an abuse contributing to check it. There is not the least foundation however for the report. The proportion of males and females born in Bantam and over the whole of Java, is nearly the same as in Europe, as we find generally to exist wherever accurate statements can be obtained. From the information collected in a very careful survey of one part of the province in question, the preponderance seemed to be on the side of male children to an extraordinary degree, the male children being about 42,000, and the females only 35,500."—*Raffles' Java*, vol. i. p. 73.

"I can take upon me to assert," says Mr. Marsden in his account of Sumatra, "that the proportion of the sexes throughout Sumatra does not differ sensibly from that ascertained in Europe; nor could I ever learn from the inhabitants of the many eastern islands whom I have conversed with, that they had remarked any disproportion in this respect."

Niebuhr expresses a very decided opinion that in the countries which he visited in the East the proportion between the male and female births is the same as elsewhere.

Dugald Stewart informs us, "that from the

latest and most accurate observations made, both in the old and new world, Laplace has thought himself authorized to conclude, that this balance between the sexes (with a trifling preponderance in favour of the male) may be regarded as *an universal law with regard to the human race*. In forming this conclusion, Laplace appears to have been much struck with the result of Humboldt's researches in America, where he found that, even between the tropics, the same proportion of male births to female obtained as was observed at Paris."

Dugald Stewart adds, "In confirmation of Laplace's conclusion with respect to the universality of this law, I am assured by the best authority, that, from a recent census in our Indian empire, it appears that the very same proportion between the sexes takes place there as in Europe."—*Active and Moral Powers of Man*, vol. ii.

N.—Page 134.

I urge not on behalf of the weaker sex an exemption from labour, nor is it my wish to recommend the least interference with the authority of the master, as far as that authority



is recognized by the laws of the land. But I would suggest, that on principles of Christian humanity, and with an especial regard to the temporal advantages of the proprietor, every encouragement should be given to the female slave to attend more to her domestic duties, and every indulgence granted to her constitutional and natural weakness. Surely it may be a question whether in any condition of society the curse which was pronounced originally on the man alone, should fall equally on the woman, and be superadded to the sorrows which are peculiarly and distinctively her own.

Every considerate planter will allow that there is evil in the indiscriminate labour of men and women in the same field, and under the superintendence of a male driver. The disregard of even the most common decencies of nature is almost inseparable from it, and the moral degradation of the female part of our population is the obvious consequence.

O.—Page 137.

This passage obviously refers to the conduct required from the Israelites towards those of their own nation who had been reduced to servitude. In the treatment of slaves obtained from the *heathen round about them*, or from *the strangers that sojourned among them*, they were allowed to exercise a far greater rigour. This permission has often been construed into a scriptural authority for the severities inflicted on slaves in the West Indies. The cases, however, are essentially different. The descendants of Abraham were especially authorized—nay, were even commanded, to punish the wicked inhabitants of Canaan. The land had been defiled by the iniquity of the people. To use the forcible language of Scripture, *it vomited out its inhabitants*. The Israelites were the appointed ministers of the Almighty in executing the severest judgments upon them. *Thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them.*¹ *Thou shalt consume all the people which the Lord thy God shall deliver thee. Thine eye shall have no pity upon them.*² Slavery was one of the evils

¹ Deut. vii. 2.² Deut. vii. 16.

appointed as a punishment for these perverse and iniquitous heathen. *Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids which thou shalt have shall be of the heathen that are round about you, of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids and ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession. They shall be your bondmen for ever ;³ but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.⁴*

In every case when a command of the Almighty is characterized by its severity, we may regard it as only of local or temporary application, and as arising out of the occasions which call for it as a punishment. Whenever his laws are of universal obligation, they are marked by a merciful purpose, and are directed to the obvious good of his creatures. The authority given to the Israelites to enslave in protracted bondage the heathen around them, can no more be construed into a warrant for the same treatment of strangers and heathens in our own times, than the peremptory command to *show no*

³ That is, to the next jubilee, when liberty was proclaimed throughout the land to ALL the inhabitants thereof. Lev. xxv. 10.

⁴ Lev. xxv. 44—46.

mercy, and to save nothing alive that breatheth among the foul and abominable nations of Canaan, will justify in a Christian the wanton murder of an untaught and unenlightened savage.

The brother of the Israelite was one of his own nation, but the Christian is to regard every individual of the whole human race as his neighbour. If the law of the Israelites in respect to slavery is to guide a Christian people, it can only be the law which enforces kindness towards a brother in bondage.

There were many mitigations of slavery among the Israelites. The penal code of the Jews guarded the person of the servant and the slave as well as of the freeman. The injunction, *whosoever smiteth a man that he die, shall surely be put to death*, equally protected all.⁵ If by an extreme severity of chastisement, the master caused the death of his slave, *he was surely to be punished*.⁶ If the violence offered maimed the servant, even so slightly as by the loss of a single tooth, he was to be recompensed by obtaining immediate freedom.⁷ The chastity of female slaves was guarded by strict regulations, and no Jew could be a slave for longer than seven years; and at the end of

⁵ Exod. xxi. 12.

⁶ Ver. 20.

⁷ Ver. 27.

that period the law enjoined, *when thou sendest him out from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty. Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him.*"⁸—*Greaves on the Pentateuch.*

Even the fugitive slave was protected by an especial enactment. *Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose, in one of thy gates where it liketh him best. Thou shalt not oppress him.*⁹

It is worthy of remark, that even the Mahomedan laws secure to the slave the right of purchasing his freedom. "Unto such of your slaves as desire a written instrument, allowing them to redeem themselves on paying a certain sum, write one if ye find good in them, (that is, have reason to believe that they will perform their engagement,) and give them of the riches of God, which he hath given you."—*Sale's Koran, chap. 24.*

⁸ Deut. xv. 13—15.

⁹ Deut. xxiii. 15, 16.

“ The introduction of Christianity (into Great Britain) contributed not a little both to alleviate the weight of servitude, and diminish the number of slaves. By the canons of the church, which were in those times incorporated with the laws of the land, and of the same authority, Christians were commanded to allow their slaves certain portions of time to work for their own benefit, by which they acquired property; the bishops had authority to regulate the quantity of work to be done by slaves, and to take care that no man used his slave harshly, but as a fellow Christian. The bishops and clergy recommended the manumission of slaves as a most charitable and meritorious action; and in order to set the example, they procured a law to be made, that all the English slaves of every bishop should be set at liberty at his death, and that every other bishop and abbot in the kingdom should set three slaves at liberty.”—*Henry's Great Britain*, b. ii. c. 3. sec. 2. p. 323.

P.—Page 139.

I have confined myself in the lecture to the *religious* obligation of granting freedom to the

slave whenever it can be equitably purchased by him. I may be allowed in a note to enter more fully on the subject, and to notice some of the leading objections which have been made to a measure apparently so just and reasonable.

It is said that the master's interest will be impaired by the withdrawal of a slave whose services he will often be unable to replace at the price at which he is sold.

There is no just reason for this assertion. The value of a slave will in every case be estimated by the market price, and this market price will be high or low in proportion to the demand for agricultural or other labour in the colony. Besides, there is nothing to prevent the master from hiring the manumitted slave, and paying him wages equivalent to his services on the estate.

It is also said that the master, from a personal regard for the slave, or from a more accurate knowledge of his worth, will estimate him far above the market price.

If he really has a regard for him, this regard can in no way be better shown than in his affording every facility towards his obtaining his freedom. His real worth will always be calculated in his appraisalment. If the master

sets a fanciful and capricious value on him, it is against reason and justice that this should operate to the detriment of the slave. We are told that the slave will lessen his value by wilful misconduct, with a view to obtain his freedom at a low price. It surely is not difficult to prevent a slave from depreciating his own moral character in abatement of his value; and the master fully possesses the means of enforcing the application of all the strength or skill which he is known to possess.

It is further objected that compulsory manumission opens the door to illicit concubinage. Is lawful marriage then common among the slaves in our colonies; or has it ever been so? Is there any check from public opinion or public law, to open and notorious profligacy arising from connexions between slaves and white men? The circumstance of a free man bestowing on a female slave the means of purchasing her manumission, is a strong presumption in favour of the permanency of his attachment, and of his securing the slave's well-being afterwards. The immorality, taking the worst possible view of the case, would not be greater than it is at present.

It is assumed that the slaves will become idle on obtaining their freedom, but this is a mere assumption. The report of the privy council (1788) speaks, on the authority of witnesses from the British West India islands, of the "invincible repugnance of the free negroes to all sorts of labour." Messrs. Fuller, Long, and Chisholm declare, that "free negroes are never known to work for hire, and that they have all the vices of the slaves." Mr. Brathwaite states, that "if the slaves in Barbados were all offered their freedom on condition of working for themselves, not one tenth of them would accept it." Governor Parry reports that "free negroes are utterly destitute of industry," and the council of the island add, that "from their confirmed habits of idleness they are the pests of society."—*Report, 1788, part 3.*

Strange, that in the face of these declarations, proceeding from persons in high official trust and authority, the free blacks have, by their superior industry, driven the lower order of whites from almost every trade requiring skill and continued exertion. I believe that not one in twenty of the working shoemakers in Barbados is a white man. The working carpenters, masons, tailors, smiths, &c. are for the most

part men of colour; and this at a time when a large white population are in the lowest state of poverty and wretchedness. In the application for casual charity the number of white persons soliciting relief is far greater than that of the free coloured. The free black and coloured inhabitants have always contributed in their full proportion to the parochial taxes, for the support of the poor whites, while their own poor receive no parochial relief,¹ but are supported by private contributions among the more wealthy of their own colour. Do these facts indicate habits of irreclaimable idleness?

I will allow that a sudden transition from absolute slavery to absolute freedom is often injurious to the manumitted slave. Sudden and extensive changes, even for the better, are seldom good in their immediate results. Were a day labourer in England to receive unexpectedly, and at once, five hundred pounds, it may be questioned whether he would be the better for it. The more gradually freedom is obtained, the greater is the chance of the habits

¹ The vestry of the parish of St. Michael in this island have lately granted the annual sum of from fifty to seventy pounds sterling to a coloured society formed for the relief of the poor of their own body.

of industry being perpetuated in the person so obtaining it.

It was under this impression that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts seem to have acted, in adopting at their general meeting in 1831 the following regulations for their estates in Barbados.

1. Slaves married according to the rites of the Established Church, and continuing to live together, to be entitled to exemption from compulsory labour one day in the week—such privilege to be forfeited by either party who may desert the other, or be guilty of immoral conduct.

2. All slaves to be allowed to purchase one or more days exemption from compulsory labour, until they are completely enfranchised :² every encouragement to be given them to employ such day or days with profit and advantage to themselves. The time of exemption from labour thus granted to, or purchased by, married women, to be so distributed as best to promote domestic habits and the comforts of their families.

² Might not the money arising from the purchased manumission of the slaves form a fund for the payment of hired free labour on the Society's estate?

3. A man and his wife to be permitted to purchase their joint freedom, for one or more days, at two-thirds of the price which would be paid for the freedom of the two if separately purchased.

4. Freedom so purchased, to be transmitted as an inheritance to all the children born in lawful wedlock.

I must be allowed to add a few observations on the subject of general emancipation.

The sanction afforded, during a very long period, to the slave trade by Great Britain, and the recognition by frequent and unequivocal laws of this species of property in the West Indies, forbid the withdrawal of the services of the slave from the master by a compulsory enactment, without some adequate compensation. I speak with great diffidence on a subject which some of our ablest statesmen have found to be beset with difficulties; but I cannot refrain from expressing my conviction, that whenever the master receives an equivalent in money for the freedom of any of his slaves, he has no just reason to complain. Even when the freedom is obtained gradually, and by the purchase of one day at a time, if a fair compensation be made

to the owner, there ought to be no objection on his part.

It may be said that in these isolated cases of manumission the person enfranchised will pass at once from the field to some domestic or handicraft employment; and that if the practice be widely extended, it will subtract materially from the required cultivation of the soil.

I must allow that agricultural labour is in great disrepute in the West Indies. It is not so in other countries, for we often find even the well educated and the affluent delighting in the cultivation of a garden or in the ruder employments of a farm. In the West Indies field labour is always associated with the whip and the driver, and other tokens of personal degradation; we therefore cannot wonder that it is generally shunned.

The first step towards the removal of the existing dislike to this species of employment is to engage the great mass of our population in a kind of voluntary field labour, of which the profits may to a certain extent perceptibly accrue to themselves. To work spontaneously, and for our own immediate benefit, is the distinctive character of freedom. We may surely

approximate to this in our West India colonies, without detriment to the master's interests. If, for instance, the sum now expended by the master in the maintenance of his slaves—averaging in this island from three to five pounds sterling each, including young and old, were commuted for its equivalent in time—say two days, or two days and a half, in the week—and the slaves were allowed on those days to cultivate their provision grounds, or to work for hire, they would virtually be free during nearly one half of their time. If they had also the power of buying off the remainder of their servitude at a fair remunerating price to the master, there would be the strongest stimulus to their increased exertion, and to the most laborious and successful cultivation of the soil. Would they be likely, after having earned so many and great advantages by field labour, to regard it with dissatisfaction, and to consider themselves degraded by following their former occupation? Would they not rather, if the permission were allowed them, continue to work for their masters as tenants on the estate, receiving either wages in money for their labour, or a portion of the produce of the land? I believe the present condition of the sugar planta-

tions in those states of South America which have granted entire freedom to their slaves, will furnish a satisfactory answer to these questions.

I should rejoice to see the slaves inalienably attached to the soil, and subject to fixed laws, to be enforced by the magistrate alone. I should rejoice to see them secured from arbitrary and capricious punishment, and regarded by the law as *persons*, not as *things*.

Q.—Page 142.

I am confident that I am not unjustly severe in this remark. It is painful to employ terms which convey so general and sweeping a censure. I would gladly have abstained from noticing the subject at all, but I could not have observed silence without participating in the guilt of connivance. I bear a ready testimony to the frequent kindness of the proprietor to his dependents. In some cases it will amount almost to injurious and culpable indulgence; but I am forced also to declare, that at times acts of cruelty are committed in our colonies without any punishment, or even public censure, falling on the offender. The excuse, that the

notice of these crimes will give a handle to those who oppose the colonial interests, is worse than frivolous. The real charge against the West Indian societies is, not that cruelties are committed among them, (for to this charge every society is more or less obnoxious,) but that the man who revels in violence and oppression has no mark set upon him, and that he is allowed to vaunt himself in the land, without control and without reproach. I am aware of the extreme difficulty of bringing to justice the perpetrators of cruel deeds in the West Indies. The laws are in most cases defective in affording protection to the bondsman ; and even where the laws might be enforced to check or punish an act of oppression, we have incurred the reproach that the fear of becoming unpopular in the community deters many a person from prosecuting the offender, or from appearing as a voluntary witness against him. These things ought not to be. I am sure that I am a friend to our colonies in thus publicly noticing and reprobating the evil.

THE END.

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